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HOW TO DEFEND HONG KONG

THE British Government would be guilty of criminal stupidity if it really imagined that it could defend Hong Kong against a full-scale Communist attack by reinforcing the garrison with 6,000 troops backed by a squadron of Spitfires from Malaya. The defence of the island of Hong Kong involves maintaining a 100-mile frontier covering the Leased Territories on the mainland which contain the deep-water port and from which Hong Kong draws its main water supply. In December, 1941, the defence force numbered about 15,000 British Regulars, Indians, Canadians and Hong Kong volunteers. The Japanese, with some 50,000 troops, captured the Leased Territories and Kowloon in three days; and, a fortnight later, deprived of water, the Island itself surrendered. In short, even if the population within the city were solidly on the British side—an impossible assumption—Hong Kong would not be militarily defensible against a large armed force carrying out an organised operation from the mainland. The 6,000 troops are, we take it, sent to deal with the danger of trouble from ex-Malayan Chinese deportees or accidental "incidents." Whether they are sufficient for this limited purpose depends on the attitude of the people who live in Hong Kong.

The two million inhabitants of the city include, first, refugees from Kuomintang rule—Communists and members of the Democratic League—who would no doubt in any case take orders from a Chinese Communist Government. Kuomintang refugees, who fled from the Liberated Areas, all tend to assume a Communist victory over the whole of China; they would have no stomach for fighting, and are already looking for a safer ditch in Formosa. The professional and middle-class Chinese certainly want the British to stay, if only because they fear the Communists. But this element of the population has never been ready to take any serious share in the job of defence. From the British point of view, the only dependable group are the Eurasians, who have no other home. They are too few to strengthen the security forces.

What have the British done since August, 1945, that we should expect the Chinese in Hong Kong to support us against their own people in a situation where race is of more fundamental importance than ideology? Our record is mixed. We were welcomed back with enthusiasm after the barbarous rule of the Japanese. We appointed a Military Governor, Admiral Harcourt, who was popular because of his informality and because of his sincere friendship with the Chinese. But after the withdrawal of the Military Government in May, 1946, the Colonial Office sent back the pre-war Governor and many pre-war Heads of Departments who had not lost their pre-war mentality. Many war-time collaborators, both Chinese and Eurasian, saved their skins and their property; many Chinese who had opposed the Japanese died in the prisons, starved on the streets or fled to Free China. One of the deepest grievances of the educated and professional Hong Kong Chinese was the refusal of promotion to European appointments. After the war it was still difficult for a Chinese or Eurasian to hold a post for which he was qualified by his degrees and experience. On the other hand, economic progress in Hong Kong has been remarkable and the British administration has been extremely liberal in comparison with that in any other part of China. Hong Kong became a refuge from both Kuomintang and Communist China, and the British managed to keep on good terms with both Communist and Kuomintang organisers.

Analysis of opinion in Hong Kong usually stops at this point. The bulk of the population, however, are coolies. Theirs is the unending struggle of filling the rice bowl. They have nothing to fear from the Communists, and they could quite easily be led against the foreign conqueror if it became Chinese Communist policy to throw us out of China.

In the China debate in the House of Commons last week, the Government found itself in the unusual position of being commended for some aspects of its Chinese policy by Mr. Macmillan and Mr. Gallacher, Mr. Wyatt and Mr. Zilliacus. Apart from a few wild men who compete in irresponsibility with newspapers which talk as if the retention of Hong Kong depended on dispatching further reinforcements of British soldiers, most M.P.s are willing, like the Government, to look at the situation with realism. Differences arise mainly from varying interpretations of the intentions of the Chinese Communists. But whatever view is taken of their relations with Moscow and their attitude to the West, we must seek an arrangement with them if we wish to continue in Hong Kong. This is necessary, not only because of the military difficulty of defending the Island, but also because our lease of the mainland territories soon expires and no Chinese—not even Chiang Kai-shek—would renew it.

That we should remain in Hong Kong is economically important both to the Chinese and to us; great wealth and great opportunities would be lost to both of us if the worst occurred. In short, only one course is open. We have to make contact with the Communist leaders "at the highest level" before we lose face by any other blunders like that of H.M.S. *Amethyst*. The first approach should be through unofficial British people who are known and trusted in China. We can think of several whose help in China today might make the difference between a successful arrangement with the Communists and a forced and ignominious withdrawal.

Council of Europe

The publication of the Statute laying down the Constitution of the Council of Europe occurred exactly one year after the Hague Conference at which the demand for a European Assembly was formulated. The French, Belgian and Dutch Governments have long favoured the formation of the Council; but Mr. Attlee and Mr. Bevin, partly because of Mr. Churchill's leadership of the European Movement, remained highly suspicious; and at Scarborough last Whitsun, Dr. Dalton, speaking for the Executive, vehemently denounced those who were trying to entice the Labour Party into collaboration with non-Socialist organisations. Now, however, the Government has surrendered—at least on the principle. The Council, which consists of an Upper House—the Committee of Foreign Ministers—and a Lower House—the Assembly proper—is to meet next August at Strasbourg; and Britain, as Mr. Morrison announced last week, is sending an all-party delegation to the Assembly. It is no secret that in the drafting of the Constitution of the Council the British delegates were the chief advocates of caution. In this respect they have certainly had their way. The Assembly is purely consultative, and even its consultative capacity is hedged round with a thicket of restrictions. It is forbidden to discuss Defence, and every item on its agenda must be either suggested or approved by the Committee of Ministers. It has to accept any members which the Committee of Ministers may decide to be suitable—the Assembly for instance has no power to question the inclusion of Turkey—and it has no say on the number or length of its sessions. It is possible that this restrictive Constitution may have the opposite effect to that intended. When the Assembly gathers for the first time at Strasbourg, will its members be content to be treated as irresponsible children who cannot be trusted even to decide the subjects they are to debate? We very much doubt it. By cribbing and confining the Assembly in this way, Mr. Bevin may well give it that explosive, corporate independence of which he seems to be so afraid.

The Bonn Constitution

The acceptance of the Bonn Constitution by the Western Germans clearly puts the three Western Powers in a stronger position for resuming discussions on a German peace treaty with the Russians. As a result of the important last-minute concessions on the subject of the financial powers of the central government, the Constitution is at least workable; and it has been approved by representatives of well over half the German nation. Mr. Acheson, therefore, will be able to put it forward in Paris as the pattern for a central government of the whole of Germany; and, if they are consistent with their past attitude, the Russians may find it difficult to pick more than minor holes in it. But the real issue at Paris, of course, will not be constitutional. Even if the Russians were willing to accept the Bonn constitution as it stands, it is still difficult to see how the two Zones could be quickly grafted together. The S.P.D. has been forbidden in the East for nearly four years. The Western Powers will argue that, if really free elections are to be held for an all-German Government, they would have to be preceded by at least twelve months of democratic free-for-all in the Eastern Zone, during which the S.P.D. and other Western parties could remuster their forces. In the second place, an all-German Occupation Statute would have to be agreed which defined the area of sovereignty reserved by the four Powers. This would involve rewriting the Ruhr Statute or, alternatively, giving the Russians a place on the control authority. In these circumstances it is difficult to understand why the ultra-cautious reaction of the Foreign Office to the first disclosure of the Russian-American talks in Lake Success has given place to a mood of dazzling optimism.

Bargain on Italy's Colonies?

When Mr. John Foster Dulles moved that the Political Committee of the Assembly should remit the question of the Italian colonies to a sub-committee for "further study," he evidently feared that the Latin-American States might again combine with the Soviet Union and the Arabs to turn down the new bargain struck between Mr. Bevin and Count Sforza. This bargain represented a substantial concession by Britain to Italian claims and also to French fears of the effect in Tunis of Britain's "appeasement" of Arab nationalism in Tripoli. Under the terms of this deal, whose conclusion behind the scenes appears to have caused at first some little displeasure at Lake Success, Italy is promised trusteeship over Tripolitania in 1951. In return, she apparently acquiesces in a settlement otherwise favourable to Britain, which is to retain trusteeship over Cyrenaica and to have the Western portion of Eritrea incorporated into the Sudan. Ethiopia would get the Eastern half or Eritrea and Somaliland would be under Italian trusteeship. The plan will no doubt evoke more of Mr. Gromyko's eloquence in his championship of Arab nationalism, and it may still fail to secure a two-thirds majority in the Assembly. In the sub-committee, however, the Latin-American States—or at least the Argentine—appear, somewhat surprisingly, to be prepared to support a settlement on these lines.

Peace Offer from Grammos

The terms of the latest peace proposal by the Greek rebels are encouragingly sensible. The rebel Minister of Justice, M. Porphyrogenis, armed with plenipotentiary powers, is now in Prague, and has enlisted the support of the Czech Foreign Minister for his request to visit Lake Success and there discuss terms of peace. The new offer is more moderate than those which were circulated at the Paris session of Uno. The demand for the immediate withdrawal of British and American missions has been dropped, together with the rebel claim to participate in any "caretaker" Cabinet formed to supervise the truce and subsequent elections. The new proposals, on the contrary, suggest the creation of a neutral Government and the holding of free elections under the supervision of a Uno commission. The first step, clearly, would be the appointment of a Uno mediator, and M. Porphyrogenis is prepared to accept the good offices of Mr. Ralph Bunche. These are terms which can be discussed, and it would be foolish, both for the Greek Government and the West, to dismiss them without further ado as "peace propaganda." If the rebels are becoming less intransigent, for whatever reason, the chance of a settlement must not be lost because the Greek Government will accept nothing less than unconditional surrender. Insistence on that disastrous formula may well commit Greece to prolonged fighting and lead the country further towards economic collapse. The difficulties of negotiating with rebels who lack any belligerent status are undeniable. But this is a case for common sense, not pedantic formalities. The United Nations already have established some kind of jurisdiction over the Greek war: this is the moment to reassert it. The success of conciliation certainly depends upon Great Power relationships. But if moderation in Germany can be followed by moderation in Greece, as is urged in a new appeal sponsored by the Union of Democratic Control and supported by many Members of Parliament, real progress can be made this summer.

Preliminary Indonesian Agreement

Faced with increasing military resistance in Indonesia, the Dutch now seem more willing to consider an agreement with the Republican representatives. The Uno Commission for Indonesia has published a report by its observers on the military situation, showing that, over a large area previously controlled by the Republican Government, the Dutch now hold only the main towns and the roads. In West and East Java, which the Dutch occupied last December, concentrations of Republican forces are reported and hostilities have continued in Sumatra. The Uno Commission observers, seeing these facts for themselves, concluded that order as well as economic recovery could only be achieved if there were an early political settlement. This now seems more likely than it has at any time since the Dutch started military action last December. A communiqué issued by the Uno Commission, under whose auspices negotiations have been going on for the past few weeks, states that a preliminary agreement has been reached in Batavia. The Dutch have now conceded the point on which the Republican delegates insisted, namely that the Republican Government shall return to Jogjakarta. The Republican delegates on their part promise to urge on their restored Government the need for a cease-fire and co-operation in the proposed round-table conference. Further, they will have one-third of the seats on any authority which might be set up in this interim situation. So far, so good. But in the past, when agreements have reached the point of being initialled, the Dutch have introduced legal quibbles and definitions. This time, they know that behind the Republican delegates are guerillas threatening their authority. They would be wise to co-operate with the Uno Commission and to make a political agreement which could be the prelude to a cease-fire and the return of the Republic.

Export Setback

Though detailed figures are not yet available, the Board of Trade has made the disquieting admission that total exports last month fell by £22 millions as compared with March, and that there was a decline of nearly 3½ per cent. in the daily rate, after allowance is made for the Easter holiday. Imports, on the other hand, show only a fractional decrease. In view of shifting world conditions, these figures are not surprising. Buyers in one country after another are complaining that British prices are too high; and American competition—helped, of course, by Marshall Aid—is becoming more serious in a number of areas. Not too much importance need be attached to a single month's figures; but, taken in conjunction with other known factors, this drop in exports points to the precariousness of Britain's "recovery" and to the danger of a recession in production and employment unless we can develop fresh markets for our exports. Sir Stafford Cripps has once more emphasised that the answer to the problem is not to be found in devaluation of sterling; for, though that would make our goods cheaper in terms of dollars, it would also put up the price of all our imports from hard currency areas, and it would certainly be accompanied by at least equal devaluations on the part of many of our customers. To some extent a solution will have to be sought in the form of lower production costs: without touching wages, there is room for cuts in selling margins, and—on a long-term view

—economies may be effected by re-equipment and redeployment. But, as is brought out clearly in an article which we print on a later page dealing with the problem presented by the American export surplus, Britain's difficulties are common to Europe and are not susceptible of easy adjustment. Meanwhile, we have agreed to buy more timber and tinned salmon from Canada. These purchases are presumably to be financed by Marshall dollars whose use for the procurement of Canadian wheat is now vetoed. None the less, the effect must be to add to the dollar burden at a time when the omens are highly unpropitious for the success of Mr. Wilson's campaign to sell British goods in the dollar area. The need for the enlargement of East-West trade in Europe becomes clearer every day.

Lancashire Coal Strike

The Lancashire miners' strike, over the question of concessionary coal, had extended by mid-week to the entire coalfield. The decision of the Lancashire miners to act without waiting for the sanction of the N.U.M. was a direct result of the brusque rejection of their claims by the National Coal Board, which seems to have been reluctant to recognise that the men have a real grievance. There is neither rhyme nor reason in the conditions under which the miners in the various coalfields do or do not receive coal either free or at pit-head price; but it is undeniable that Lancashire and Cumberland are the areas worst off in this respect, and it should have been possible for the present dispute to be settled without a stoppage: there was clearly room for a compromise, such as seems to have been well on the way in Cumberland before the Lancashire stoppage began. In face of the coal shortage there is every reason for discouraging miners, as well as the community, from wasting fuel; but that is no reason for treating one group of miners much worse than others, especially as the men in Lancashire and Cumberland enjoy no compensating advantage in wage rates or other conditions of employment. The National Coal Board may have been tempted to use the chance of playing off one coalfield against the rest; but its original "tough" line was quite unjustified. We are glad to note that, according to the latest news, the Board seems ready to accept in principle the case for concessionary coal in Lancashire, and that it has now become a question of negotiations on the price at which the men can buy it.

Canadian Seamen's Strike.

The British dockers and seamen who have refused to work Canadian ships with "blackleg" crews have been right to show their solidarity with the striking Canadian seamen. This bitter strike, in which many of the strikers have been sent to jail in their home ports, has arisen directly from an attempt by Canadian shipowners to impose lower wages and poorer conditions. The Canadian Seamen's Union has understandably fought back, though the position has been complicated by the claim of another Union—the Seafarer's International—to organise Canadian seamen. This Union, which has received substantial backing from the shipowners and has signed a contract with them, can only be called a bona-fide Union by stretching the definition so widely that it becomes meaningless. The Canadian Seamen's Union, on the contrary, is officially recognised by the Trades and Labour Congress—the Canadian counterpart of the American Federation of Labour—which has officially denounced the opposition union as disruptive, much to the dislike of the A.F. of L.'s leadership. The assertions that the C.S.U. is a "Red" Union and that its company-sponsored rival is both safe and respectable, are equally irrelevant. A well-organised attempt is being made to break a trade union which is militant enough to fight for the interests of its membership. The C.S.U., moreover, remains in good standing in its appropriate Congress. This is a case for our T.U.C. to support. Surely its official sympathies cannot lie with a dubious organisation of strike-breakers and "dual unionists."

Scottish Prospect

The usual air of complacency for which the Scottish Home Department is famous permeates its latest Annual Review of economic affairs in Scotland. "Consolidation of previous gains rather than the approval of a large number of new projects" is said to have been "the key-note" of industrial development during 1948. In fact, though the original aim was to provide the Scottish Development Area with 155,000 more jobs than in 1937 by a programme of Government-financed factory building, the number attained last year was under 8,000, making the total achieved so far less than one-third of the target. The closure in 1948 of a considerable number of new factories opened by branches of English firms is passed over in discreet silence. The feature in the situation, however, which is likely to cause most criticism in Scotland is the drop in the number of permanent houses under construction from 47,000 to 38,000. Since the war, 39,000 permanent houses have been constructed in Scotland. This represents 9 per cent. of the numbers built in England, whereas the population of Scotland is 10 per cent. of that of the United Kingdom. This calculation, however, takes no account of the fact that the housing needs of Scotland were quite disproportionate to those of the rest of Great Britain. The Scottish Housing Advisory Committee, in its 1944 Report, arrived at the conclusion that, excluding the question of replacing houses which, "although they have no sanitary conveniences or no internal water supply, are not technically regarded as unfit," there was an urgent need for 470,000 new houses in Scotland. Allowing for additional marriages and for the number of houses which have become unfit since 1944, the present housing need cannot be much less than 500,000, even when account is taken of the 32,000 temporary houses constructed in addition to the permanents. At the present rate of construction, the Scottish Home Department is barely keeping pace with obsolescence and the growth in the number of family units.

The Slices of the Cake

The *Daily Worker* has raised a point of substance in connection with the official statistics showing the distribution of the national income. It points out that, as an argument in favour of the "wage-freeze," Government spokesmen have made much of the evidence in the *Economic Survey* that, between 1938 and 1940, wages, after taxation, grew from 39 per cent. to 48 per cent. of the national income, whereas rent, interest and profit dropped from 34 per cent. to 28 per cent. These figures, however, are arrived at by a calculation which excludes undistributed profits from the capitalists' slice of the cake. If undistributed profits are included, the share taken by rent, interest and profit in 1948 was 36 per cent., as compared with 37 per cent. before the war, while the wages percentage was 45, against 39. The picture is thus substantially modified, and the question is whether it is statistically sound to include undistributed profits in the figure for the capitalists' share. It is true that, until they are distributed as dividends, they are not strictly "personal income," but they certainly become the property of shareholders. Furthermore, the disclosure of large additions to reserve normally has the effect of increasing the market value of a company's equity capital—thus providing the shareholders with realisable, tax-free profits.

PARLIAMENT: Misty Charges

In profile, Geoffrey Cooper looks like Sherlock Holmes. Like Holmes, he can construct a case from a fag-end. Unlike Holmes, he can't always prove it. Since early in his hour-long speech last Friday he suggested that some of his best friends were Civil Servants, it wasn't surprising that collectively he should regard them as a pack of Dr. Moriartys.

The sparse House could not disagree with his initial complaints about the squalor of some Government offices. Only when he began to make specific charges against misty, anonymous individuals and "syndicates"—what an evocative word!—did Members get restless, and ask for more, or none at all. Glenvil Hall rightly demanded details of Cooper's grave allegations. But Cooper wasn't to be drawn. His reply was: "No details without a full-scale investigation into the Civil Service." Or: "The whole cess-pool or nothing."

There is, of course, good and honourable reason for a Member not to use his Parliamentary privilege in order to pillory people by name. Mallalieu, after making the most vigorous and best-argued Labour speech during the Iron and Steel Debate, followed precedent when he illustrated his accusation of nepotism in the steel industry by referring to an Admiral works manager, without mentioning his name. A Member takes personal responsibility for the truth of his statements. If he cannot produce a valid source for his generalised attack or particular charges, his speech is no more than gossip.

Alfred Edwards, Cooper's Middlesbrough colleague, renewed his complaints against bureaucracy in a speech opposing steel nationalisation. An Independent Socialist (there are now three in the House—Edwards, Pritt and Platts-Mills), he faced his former associates as he faced his former principles, with pity rather than embarrassment. But Stanley Evans, the sturdy Member for Wednesbury, did not want Edwards to patronise him. With a wave of his hand at the Member for Middlesbrough East, the Hon. Member for Wednesbury began: "I have always had a good deal of liking for the Hon. Member for Wednesbury . . ." A slip of the subconscious which *Hansard* has kindly corrected.

The main argument on the Iron and Steel Bill's Third Reading was less about the Bill's merit than about the time given to its discussion. Waldron Smithers, on a Point of Order, began by asking the Speaker to imitate Sir Thomas More, a former Speaker, who refused to grant Henry VIII a subsidy "without due debate." Mr. Speaker said that he was a servant of the House, which had decided to use the Guillotine; and in any case he himself had no wish to lose his head.

Both Chetwynd and the Minister of Supply established statistically that the Opposition had had ample time to make their case. If, in the 698 speeches which the Opposition made in Committee, it could not amend, improve or rebut the Government's case, it must have been either unwilling or unable to do so.

The Debate dragged on, with the boredom that comes when many words have been too often repeated. When Strauss rose to wind up, the Tory barracking chorus got to work with bray, bark and yelp. From the Tory front-bench, Galbraith kept interrupting with little snaps of "Point of Order!" At one moment, it seemed that the Tories intended to smother Strauss's reply—as, just a few weeks ago, they had out-shouted Strachey.

But Strauss's equable insistence overcame the noise, and he finished a minute or two before nine-thirty. This gave Gurney Braithwaite the chance to make a speech which was unfortunately drowned by the Labour cheers that accompanied it from beginning to end. Braithwaite's gesticulations were life-like, and Labour Members declared that speech to have been his best in this Parliament. MAURICE EDELMAN

UNWANTED ALLY

On his last "Day of Victory," celebrated appropriately on April 1, General Franco broadcast a speech from which the optimism of his earlier radio discourse, at the end of 1948, seemed to have evaporated. No longer did he assert, as he had done three months ago, that "we have survived the most difficult years . . . a reassuring future lies before us." On the contrary, he now spoke of "grave subversive acts . . . a recrudescence (of hostility) . . . active residues (of democratic ideas)." And at the same time an emissary of the Caudillo was making it known in Washington that, failing immediate and substantial assistance in dollars, the regime was threatened with collapse.

It is indeed clear that the anti-Franco movement within Spain is as active as it ever has been since the Civil War. From the Spanish press and broadcasts, supplemented by information from Resistance sources, it is possible to compile a revealing coverage of events in Spain. During the month of April, for instance, a list of such news items gives a typical picture of repression and terror. Four Communists—Carrero, Valverde, Puig and Mestres—were executed; and another Resistance leader, under sentence of death, died in Bilbao prison from causes unknown. In one week the numbers of death sentences officially announced were, in Barcelona, seven; in Albacete, five, in Madrid, three; in Bilbao, two; elsewhere, three. In Galicia, one Civil Guard was killed and five were wounded in an engagement with seven *guerrilleros*, all of whom died fighting; and two other Civil Guards were shot—one in Cuenca, one in Badajoz. In Cordoba twenty-one peasants were arrested for "subversive activities," and there were thirty further political arrests in Orense, and still more round Cadiz. In various parts of Spain, sixteen railway "accidents" were recorded, chiefly to trains carrying Government goods or personnel.

Despite Civil Guard terror, this uncrushed Resistance is being maintained in a country where economic and social conditions are steadily deteriorating. Not more than 15 per cent. of the population of Spain lives in any sort of comfort after ten years of Franco's rule. Millions are on the edge of starvation; and a steadily rising cost of living is making life almost impossible for all but the survivors of the period of easy money. Tuberculosis has become a plague; and, as the country sinks steadily into depression and misery, even Franco's middle-class supporters are becoming disillusioned.

In these circumstances the self-appointed Regent of Spain may well be watching with anxious eyes the progress of the quiet but insistent campaign on both sides of the Atlantic in favour of bringing Spain "step by step" back into the community of nations. The advocates of "support by appeasement" rest their case broadly on three arguments: Spanish trade is important for the economy of Western Europe; if Franco went, Spain would swing violently towards Communism; Spanish air bases are an essential factor in the strategy of the Atlantic Pact.

Now, however much or little importance be attached to Spanish oranges and Rio Tinto copper, the fact remains that the tottering Spanish economy would be a liability rather than an asset, if it were included in Western Union. The loan of $25 millions which Franco recently obtained from the Chase Bank will be totally ineffective to restore the economic situation; so long as Spain is governed by the present corrupt and inefficient dictatorship, it will merely be a sieve through which loaned dollars will pour as fruitlessly as the American assistance vainly provided to the Kuomintang.

As for the advertised "danger from Communism," it is true that the strength of the Spanish C.P. rose to perhaps half a million during the Civil War—for the simple reason that, by their discipline, energy and enthusiasm, the Communists were the most effective supporters of the legitimate Government. But Communism has never been a mass movement in Spain; among the workers there are a hundred Socialists or Anarcho-Syndicalists for every Communist, and it is doubtful to-day whether the Spanish C.P. numbers more than 50,000—its strength at the outbreak of the Civil War.

There remains the military factor. During last week's debate in the Political Committee of the United Nations Assembly, Mr. Ray Atherton angrily rebutted Mr. Gromyko's accusation that the United States were busy with military missions preparing air bases in Spain. He failed to satisfy Mr. Gromyko, who probably remembered that when the ham-handed diplomacy of Mr. Chan Gurney and his military and naval colleagues in Madrid last autumn led to American press protests, the State Department spokesman had to qualify his denials of an "arrangement" with Franco by the admission that "the question of bases in the Iberian peninsula would have to be taken into consideration" and, furthermore, that "United States strategy in Western Europe could not neglect the fact that the peninsula would be geographically ideal as a rear war base." That may be true—on one condition: Congress must be prepared, if that is its conception of Spain's destiny, to spend billions of dollars on a complete reconstruction of Spain's communication system. Failing that, the line of the Pyrenees would not be tenable against invasion.

It is not, however, in the light of considerations of economic or military advantage that this issue must be judged. The resolution put forward in the Political Committee by an incongruous alliance of Latin-American and Arab States recommended that member nations should be free to resume full diplomatic relations with Franco Spain. We have never felt that the replacement of ambassadors by diplomatic representatives of lower grade was an effective or realistic method of dealing with the problem of Spanish Fascism. But, as all the members of the Political Committee must have been well aware, this resolution was designed as a first step in the process of rehabilitating Franco and the Falange. With full diplomatic recognition restored, what logical case could there be for refusing Spanish collaboration, at least in the functional agencies of the United Nations? Why, indeed, should Spain, in the midst of a politically "dangerous" economic depression, be deprived of a share in Marshall Aid? That obviously would be the conclusion to which this "step by step" policy must lead. Yet when the resolution came to a vote, and was passed by 25 to 16, both Britain and the United States were included among the 16 nations abstaining. British policy, said Mr. Hector McNeil, is "a positive attitude towards democracy and negative towards Fascism."

Mere "negation" is an attitude which the great majority of the British people will find profoundly unsatisfactory in their Government. It has never been easy to see what positive steps could best be taken to remove the Franco regime by action from without—particularly since the process of self-liquidation initiated by the Acting President, Martinez Barrio, has reduced the Republican Government-in-Exile to virtual impotence. But the United Nations might at least have supported the Polish proposal to put an embargo on the shipment of arms and strategic materials to Spain. When the resolution approving the re-appointment of ambassadors comes before the Assembly, where it must secure a two-thirds majority to be effective, is it too much to hope that Mr. McNeil will at least climb down from his "negative" fence and make it clear that his countrymen would view with abhorrence any attempt to include a nakedly Fascist dictatorship in the membership either of Western Union or of the United Nations?

In endeavouring to mobilise world opinion and to assemble co-ordinated military strength against the totalitarian Soviet Union and its associates, the Western Powers have chosen a high moral line; disavowing aggressive intentions, they have taken their stand on principle as the defenders of democracy, freedom and human dignity. To accept General Franco as an ally in that brave campaign would be to make a mock of those fine professions and to admit the moral bankruptcy of the Western world.

CONSUMERS AT SEA

Last week, at Scarborough, the representatives of ten million members of Co-operative Societies in Great Britain were debating both the internal organisation of their movement and its place in the society towards which we have been moving rapidly since the war. These two things are closely connected and are also bound up with the Co-operative movement's relations with the Labour Party. Many of the Co-operative leaders feel that, although the Labour Party pays lip-service to Co-operation, too little regard is paid to its achievements and potentialities in the formulation of the Labour programme; and they would like to see their movement better organised as a single pressure group for ensuring that the Labour Party should pay more attention to its claims. This matter has become much more urgent since the publication of the new draft Labour Programme—or rather since the discussions between the Labour and Co-operative leaders which took place while it was being prepared. It has become so because the Labour Party is now proposing both a modest extension of public ownership into the field of manufacturing industry and a more considerable development, on a permanent footing, of State activity in the fields of marketing and distribution.

Inevitably, as this stage is reached, the question arises whether certain undertakings that have been built up by the Co-operative movement in competition with private enterprise are to be absorbed into comprehensive nationalised services. In the first stages of socialisation this issue hardly arose: the Co-operative movement's solitary coal mine hardly counted. But even so, some Co-operators were restive at the wholesale purchasing activities of the Ministry of Food and at the development of producers' monopolies under the Agricultural Marketing Acts; and there was quite a flutter when it was suggested that the National Coal Board was casting eyes on the retail trade in coal, in which the Co-operative Societies are strongly established. The new Labour programme involves the taking over of part of the work of the Co-operative Insurance Society; and, though the Labour Party has evidently been careful to limit

its invasion of spheres of Co-operative activity to the least possible, there is alarm over the proposals for State manufacturing as a means of breaking private monopolies and ensuring supplies of utility goods, as well as over the plans for putting State wholesale trade in foodstuffs on a more permanent footing.

Co-operative leaders are ready to take fright at the threat that their enterprises may share, at least in part, the fate that has befallen a number of local government trading services. They are, however, well aware that the main body of active Co-operators is wholeheartedly on the side of the Labour Party on most of the broad political and economic issues of the day; and even those who are most outspoken in criticism of nationalisation projects that affect Co-operative interests usually declare at the same time their loyalty to the existing alliance between the Labour and Co-operative Parties. They are well aware that the Co-operative Party could not return a single M.P. without Labour support, and that, in politics, most active Co-operators are "Labour" first and foremost, and Co-operators a long way second.

The Co-operative leaders, therefore, cannot even contemplate an outright rupture with the Labour Party; all they can do, having in any event less than nothing to hope from the Conservatives, is to act as a pressure group upon the Labour Party. In doing this, they are handicapped by not knowing at all clearly what they really want. Some of them, especially among those whose main connection is with the purely trading side of the movement, wish little more than to go on as they are now, with minor favours from the Government and an assurance that socialisation by the State will not impinge on any of their more important trading activities. But there are others, to whom the Co-operative ideal means more, who cannot feel satisfied with such a prospect, because they fully realise that Co-operation, even if it keeps on growing, can hardly hope along its present lines of development to do more than hold its present proportion of the total trade in consumers' goods and services; and that, accordingly, a refusal to agree to the public acquisition of any type of enterprise in which Co-operation is seriously engaged means in effect guaranteeing the continuance of private enterprise over that part of the field which Co-operation is unable to occupy by open competition with its rival. Indeed, it is plain enough that, if Co-operators insist that the State must do nothing which they are doing, they are in substance serving as the bulwark both of large-scale capitalism and of the small trader, however little they may relish this way of stating the truth.

What line, then, are they to take? The outright course would be to demand that the State should nationalise their leading rivals and then, instead of managing them itself, should hand them over to the Co-operative movement. Even, however, if such a course were at present politically practicable, the Co-operative leaders would shrink back from it, for two reasons—first, that they do not feel they could do the job, and second, that they value the voluntary character of their movement, which would necessarily be lost were it to become a State-supported monopoly. It is all very well to dream of a Co-operative Republic, in which everyone would be a voluntary Co-operator and all the consumers' industries (and those making their materials?) would be run as Co-operative concerns. But it is plain enough that no such thing could come about in fact except by compulsion, and with the full support of the State. For no such development is the Co-operative movement (or British public opinion) ready; and accordingly Co-operators have to choose between becoming the involuntary allies of capitalists and private traders against schemes of socialisation which affect their own business, and being prepared, where an industry or service needs unified organisation in the public interest, to give up some part of their enterprise to the State.

It would be much easier for Co-operators to choose the second course if they could be offered some kind of real participation in the control of industries or services thus made subject to socialisation. For example, they could be given, as representatives of the consumers, a special place on the boards of State buying or marketing agencies, and could be used, to the exclusion of capitalist concerns, as agents of public enterprises, in distributing such things as milk or coal, or in retailing cut-price utility products made in State factories or in private factories under strict conversion-costing systems. The solution, it seems, must lie in the long run in some such partnership as this between State and Co-operative enterprise; but the approach will have to be tentative and experimental, both because of the outcry which any favouring of the "Co-ops" would provoke from the private interests affected, and because the Co-operators themselves are at present unready to shoulder the responsibilities.

For the Co-operative movement, despite its outstanding success within its own field, is not in too healthy a condition. It succeeds less because it does its job particularly well than because its device of dividend on purchases is a social convenience valued by millions of housewives, and because it can make a strong appeal for "loyalty" in most working-class areas. These factors would not prevail if it did its work *badly*: they are of immense weight as long as it does its job just tolerably well. That is about what the Co-operative movement does now achieve, in face of a vast improvement in the efficiency of its rivals; and, while it is good enough to keep the movement expanding roughly *pari passu* with the total volume of trade in the fields it covers, it is not good enough to enable it to become the main, much less the exclusive, distributor of retail goods, or their main manufacturer.

What is wrong with it? In the first place, many of the small Societies which still maintain their entire independence are, and show signs of remaining, little more than grocer shops of a not particularly enterprising kind. Secondly, when Societies become large, by growth or amalgamation, many of them lose effective touch with their members and cease to be real examples of democratic consumers' control. But, when this happens, they fall into the hands of their managers and of small cliques of committee members. For the most part, Co-operative managers are poorly paid, and not disposed to be venturesome; and for the most part those who spend their time serving on Co-operative Committees are not very interesting or enterprising people. There are, of course, a good many outstanding exceptions to both these generalisations; but it remains broadly true that the atmosphere of Co-operative trade is somewhat stifling, and that the movement has failed to realise nearly enough the necessity for new blood and for attracting high-class men.

As long as these conditions remain, the Co-operative movement will be in danger of turning into an obstacle to progress, even when it means to advance it. There is a great deal to be said in favour of limiting the field of State enterprise and of making the fullest possible use of alternative forms of socialisation—among which Co-operation should certainly rank as one. But the condition of this is that Co-operation shall both improve its quality of service and begin to look less negatively at the vital problem of cutting the costs of producing and distributing consumers' goods. The recent institution of national membership, whereby any Co-operator can trade at any store within the national scheme, is a great step forward; but it is only a step, and it is to be hoped that the creation of a new central executive agency representing all sections of the movement, which was approved at last week's Congress, indicates a growing awareness of the need for going a long way further with new methods appropriate to the vast changes that have taken place since the movement's present structures and policies were devised.

THE DOLLAR DILEMMA

Up to now, the problem of recovery in Europe has been discussed entirely in terms of the European trade deficit. Though few now believe it practicable, the ostensible aim of the European Recovery Programme is to enable the O.E.E.C. countries to pay for their dollar imports until their exports have increased sufficiently to balance their trade—the goal set for 1952–53. United States policy has been to regard the payments problem as one for which Europe itself must find the ultimate solution. The West European countries have been urged to get together, trade more with each other, and find alternative sources of imports. On O.E.E.C. instructions they have each produced national programmes for enormous export expansions; pacts and unions and committees have been formed. All this has created the impression that Western Europe is co-operatively solving its trade deficit problem.

This impression is entirely dispelled by the *Survey* issued by the Economic Commission for Europe. Western Union, in economic terms, is clearly a myth. Little has been done in the past year to increase trade between the West European countries; it is still only 72 per cent. of pre-war. Nothing has been done to integrate the national programmes; mutually inconsistent, they actually provide for *less* international specialisation and trade than there was in this region before the war. The most fantastic example of this lack of integration in the West is the position of Western Germany: it alone of the O.E.E.C. group imports all its wheat from the U.S.A., and can compel other West European countries to pay for its essential exports in dollars, refusing admittance of their exports, while accepting American imports of the same type. Its dollar deficit has increased in the past year from $556 to $1,119 millions, while illegal exports by Allied personnel and Germans are estimated at $200 million. Clearly the Bizone is the most favoured nation.

But though there is little sign of closer co-operation between the West European countries, on a national basis there has been real progress. By the end of 1948, industrial production in Europe had struggled back to the 1938 level. The balance of payments with the outside world has improved. Europe's total deficit with all overseas countries has been reduced by $2,000 million, from $7,600 in 1947 to $5,600 millions in 1948. The reduction is due chiefly to the improvement in Britain's trading position, and to a general increase of earnings from shipping. All the West European countries have reduced their deficits, except France and Western Germany, the only country whose deficit has increased. If the cost of imports from the dollar area had not risen, the deficit could have been cut by another billion dollars.

Yet, in spite of this improvement in production and trade, Western Europe is no nearer to a solution of its underlying problem, the deficit with the United States. The O.E.E.C. countries have reduced the deficit on commodity trade with the United States in the past year from $4,900

million to $3,700 million, by cutting down imports by $1,000 million and importing from elsewhere; but exports to the U.S.A. have increased by only $200 million. Moreover, these exports consist mainly of the small specialities—U.K. whisky, French wine, Greek tobacco. In the branches of industry where Western Europe is planning the biggest expansion of production and exports, steel, machinery and equipment, there has been no expansion; nor, under present conditions, is there likely to be, on account of the vast difference in competitive power between American and European industry.

Here, the *Survey* finds, lies the real root of the problem. The U.S.A. has a surplus both of primary products and manufactures, and Europe can only pay for the primary products which it buys from America by the export of manufactures which the U.S.A. can produce far more cheaply. Since 1938 the disparity in competitive power has increased enormously. Before the war, the industrial output of Europe was one-third larger than that of the U.S.A.; now it is less than three-quarters of the U.S. output. With the increase of production has gone a rapid rise in productivity: according to the *Survey*, the productivity of labour in industry in America is now four times as high as in Europe. It is this disparity in productive power which is the most powerful obstacle—even more powerful than the American tariff—to the expansion of European exports.

The *Survey's* main argument is that it is now the American surplus which is the primary problem, and not the West European deficit. Each is the counterpart of the other. So long as Europe's production and trade were far below pre-war levels, it was reasonable to regard the deficit as the chief factor; but with the degree of recovery which has been achieved in Europe, the nature of the problem has changed fundamentally: the European deficit is no longer the expression of the need for emergency relief and reconstruction, but of the long-term disparity in productive power. The United States can no longer shift the responsibility for a solution to Western Europe; it cannot insist that the O.E.E.C. countries should evolve a policy for dealing with the deficit, if it refuses itself to evolve a policy for dealing with the surplus. It must choose between three possible courses—to export less; or to import more; or to lend on a long-term and predictable basis.

So long as this decision is not taken, there is no solution which Western Europe can find. Its national programmes for export expansion must remain hopelessly unrealistic, if the U.S.A. does not intend to balance its trade. It cannot do much to wipe out the dollar deficit by trading more with "other overseas countries" (the usual O.E.E.C. get-out) because all the major trading regions of the world have dollar deficits too. "So long as the surplus retains its universal character, the restoration of multilateral trade and payments in world trade is rendered impossible." For the same reason, the West European countries find it difficult to expand trade among themselves: so long as each is preoccupied with a dollar deficit, each must maintain controls of imports and currency. The O.E.E.C. payment scheme tends to harden trade channels into the existing pattern, and dollar aid offers no incentive to any recipient country to balance its trade or expand trade with its neighbours. E.R.P. in fact tends to prevent that development of inter-West European trade which is urged by the O.E.E.C. administration.

There remains, of course, the possibility of reducing the deficit by the expansion of trade between Eastern and Western Europe, whose needs are so largely complementary. The industrialisation plans of the East European countries offer an expanding market for the steel, machinery, and equipment which the West European countries programme for expansion. In return, they can now offer larger supplies of foodstuffs and primary products; the prospect of long-term expansion of food exports depends on whether they can get increased supplies of agricultural equipment, particularly tractors, from the West. (Inter-East European trade, it is interesting to see, has increased to nearly three times the pre-war level, and though there is no regional co-ordination of plans, the chief industrial countries, Poland and Czechoslovakia, have gone far in this direction.) But East-West trade is still only 42 per cent. of the pre-war level, though some Eastern essential exports, particularly Polish coal, have increased. Here the chief obstacle to expansion is American obstruction.

Sooner or later, the United States will have to decide what its own economic policy is to be. It cannot continue to use E.R.P. as a means of postponing the decision, and insisting that Western Europe should find the solution, while every approach to a solution is blocked through its own lack of policy. Without such a decision, the most that the West European countries can do is to continue to try to cut down dollar imports, while the U.S.A. continues to finance a programme which increases its own surplus. Unless they are content to see Western Germany become the main beneficiary of their efforts to reduce the deficit, the West European countries will have to ask the United States to do a little planning too.

DOREEN WARRINER

A LONDON DIARY

I KNOW that if I were a Southern Irishman I should hate partition and also feel a notable lack of enthusiasm about being part of the British Commonwealth. But I hope that I should be reasonable enough not to seek one objective in a way that necessarily defeats the other! Partition would yield in time to attrition. The tough Protestant majority in the Six Counties could be worn down in time by the need of common defence and trade and the increasing proportion of Catholic births. But when Eire became a Republic outside the Commonwealth she automatically compelled Britain formally to become what she has always been accused of being—the guarantor of partition. Obviously Britain is compelled to defend any territory that is part of the United Kingdom; the Six Counties, as long as they remain the Six Counties, have to be defended against armed attack, just as Kent has to be defended in similar circumstances. Mr. Attlee, when questioned in the House, had to state that this was the fact; and, when asked by Sir Basil Brooke, he had to promise to give this guarantee in legislative form. Mr. Costello and everyone else knew that this had happened when I was in Ireland last February. Now he threatens to rouse all the overseas Irish in England and everywhere else against the Government which has at last agreed to recognise the Republic of Ireland!

* * *

The Communists may over-run the whole of the vast area of the Chinese countryside, but, people ask, have they the trained personnel to administer great cities like Shanghai or the technical equipment to organise a nation? The answer would seem to be that it will of course take time to make order out of chaos, but that shortage of personnel and lack of technical knowledge may be much less serious than is commonly assumed. A great deal of scientific research has been carried out during the last ten years in China in spite of almost unimaginable difficulties; and the student scientists, many of whom have had technical training in America, hate the Kuomintang just because it has offered them neither outlet nor security. The only serious appraisal of the position of Chinese science that I have seen appeared some months ago in a book entitled *Science Outpost* (Pilot Press) by Dr. Joseph Needham and his wife, who during the years 1942-6 worked in China for the British Council's Scientific Office. Their book records their travels and brings together, in an unusual anthology, excerpts from letters describing remote parts of China; articles on the physico-chemical, the biological and social sciences in South-West China, in Western Szechuan and in the far North-West; science and technology in the far South-East. The list of scientific papers by Chinese scientists which the Needhams publish as an Appendix covers subjects of special relevance to Chinese conditions and suggests the wisdom of Mao Tse-tung in his appeal to the scientists as well as to other intellectuals to co-operate with the Communists in building a new China.

* * *

Politics has raised its ugly head in our village. National newspapers solemnly announce that "Critic" is standing as a Labour candidate for the Parish Council. There are not many more than 300 people in the village, and the duties and powers of a Parish Councillor are not extensive. Periodically, five Very Important People, including the chief local farmer and land-owner, probably somebody from the Manor and three others of unimpeachably correct status and opinions, select themselves for the Council and are accepted by a show of hands in the school-hall. For the first time, this year the selection is by ballot. Several village workers have decided that they want a change. They do not see why our village should not even appear in the schemes of sewage development. They do not see why, when water and electricity pass through the main street of the village, it should be laid on in so few houses. They even talk about a club room and other amenities for the local youth. So they have challenged the five eminent citizens, braving loud and shrill outcry at the wickedness of introducing Party politics into our happy village life. Now it would, indeed, be absurd for the voting in such matters of village life to follow strictly the lines of the national party warfare. Oddly enough, however, this point had never arisen as long as no Socialist stood for the Council. Conservatism is not party politics; Labour is. For my part I have given my personal pledge that when a Council is elected consisting entirely of anti-Conservatives, no Party politics should be allowed to enter again into the village life.

* * *

The campaign has, in any case, done good. One-sixth of the village population turned up in the minute schoolroom on Saturday night to discuss the unprecedented situation. A comparative new-comer to the area was presented as challenger for the more important post of Rural District Councillor. Agricultural labourers, whose views had not been previously heard in public, explained in the presence of the gentry, including the gentry's representative on the Rural District Council, just how far short he came in their view as representative. He had not agitated about any of their grievances; he had apparently acquiesced in the refusal of fifty Airey houses which had been offered by the Ministry. They explained, for the most part quite politely,

that they now wanted a new representative. It was extremely difficult to see why it should be regarded as wicked on their part to make such a demand, but the gentry were really very much upset. Feudalism, tempered by the democratic turmoil of the world, had survived in its most kindly and charitable form in our village. Quite sincerely it seemed to the gentry outrageously ungrateful for us to prefer to exercise our rights as citizens. They felt, like Louis XVI, that this was not a revolt but a revolution.

* * *

The story is going round the House of Commons that Mr. Skeffington Lodge, Member of Parliament for Bedford, called during his recent visit to America at a well-known bookshop in New York and asked for a copy of Evelyn Waugh's *The Loved One*. The assistant astonished him by asking: "Excuse me, but do you want it for yourself or for your fiancée?" Skeffington Lodge said, in fact, that he wanted it for himself, but he could not make out why such a question should be put to him. "Oh," said the assistant, "we have had many customers who have not read the book and who have bought it for their fiancées. The results, we understand, have been most unfortunate."

* * *

I am glad that the B.B.C. and the newspapers have been making a fuss about Sir Thomas Beecham. He is one of those egotists whose personality exasperates everyone, but who yet imposes himself upon his generation. My own favourite story of Sir Thomas describes how, in one of our great cities, he entered an hotel which usually kept a special suite reserved for him. He reviled the manager in the strongest terms when he found that his usual rooms had been taken by someone else. The manager explained that, as Sir Thomas was absent and the hotel was full, he had had no alternative. Sir Thomas demanded that the interloper should be turned out. The manager regretted that it was impossible and introduced him to the occupier of the rooms who, opportunely, arrived at that moment. Sir Thomas explained that the rooms were usually reserved for him and that he required them. The other replied that he had taken the rooms and intended to stick to them. The outraged Sir Thomas shouted: "Do you know who I am?" "No." "I am Sir Thomas Beecham." "Really," said the other, "I would not give up my suite for you even if you were Sir Malcolm Sargent." CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed.

Paste entries on a POSTCARD and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

To describe a moribund patient as "badly cheesed off" is hardly worthy of the great profession of nursing.—*Nursing Mirror*. (E. Jones.)

If a third world war overwhelms Europe our forward defences should be the Pyrenees, with our main position on the lines of Torres Vedras. What was good enough for the Duke should be good enough for us.—Letter in *Truth*. (Chris Charles.)

A police sergeant agreed, amid laughter, at West London on Monday that, when he experienced difficulty in dialling 999 to summon assistance, one of two men whom he had arrested loaned him 2d. to make the telephone call.—*West London Chronicle*. (Mr. S. Hearst.)

Baytown Colonel again finished with cramp. He has been undergoing treatment by the Harley Street psychiatrist Mr. Brooks, but does not seem to have responded.—*Greyhound Express*. (W. A. Gregory.)

Whilst the Conservative Party lays no claim to being the only one motivated by Divine guidance, it does recognise that politics are a necessary evil, the inevitable reward of sin.—Letter in *Middlesex County Times*. (P. L. Jackson.)

In giving the blessing, the Provost prayed that God would fulfil the just desire of Skegness hoteliers for the prosperity of their business.—*Manchester Guardian*. (Mrs. L. Martins.)

Judge —— said the conduct of the defendant was disgusting. "That any man could hit a girl who wears glasses is beyond my comprehension."—*Evening News*. (J. Scott-Bell.)

A radio-telephone description of the Fulham match was relayed to comedian Tommy Trinder in Australia. Tommy is, of course, a Fulham director. The special relay cost £801, but the victory afforded ample compensation.—*Sunday Post*. (Geoffrey H. Tharme.)

COMMONWEALTH WHITE

(After Rudyard Kipling)

Should the British Commonwealth
(May the Lord preserve it!)
Raised to splendid sovereignty,
Model for Democracy,
Keep within the Family
One who does not serve it?

Freedom is the Empire faith,
Tolerance its basis,
But among Dominion States
One the concept violates,
One who brands and subjugates
Black and coloured races.

She to bond and faith untrue
Yet asks all to love her,
For she is South Africa,
She is White South Africa,
Black man's hell, South Africa,
Africa all over!

White South Africa expounds
Race discrimination,
And she has by law decreed
As a just and Christian deed,
Safeguarding the master-breed,
Native segregation.

Rights of Empire citizens
Elsewhere are acclaiméd;
Africa their progress blights,
Africa bans Human Rights,
Africa made safe for Whites
Makes the rest ashaméd.

Can they share a common bond
Or a link discover
With Malan's South Africa,
Backveldt Boer South Africa?
Why then is South Africa
Whitewashéd all over?

Thus does Whitehall statesmanship
Ease Dominion friction;
Commonwealths are kept by tact;
Blink unpalatable fact,
By politic word and act
Treat the fact as fiction.

Though South Africa betrays
Common obligations,
Somehow it is understood
By the Empire sisterhood,
Concepts must give way to good
Commonwealth Relations.

Hush! Blacks live like pigs in sties,
Whites like pigs in clover!
But she is South Africa,
Commonwealth South Africa,
Still our own South Africa,
Africa all over! SAGITTARIUS

POLAND REVISITED

OWING to the international situation, there is much nervous tension in Poland which was absent a year ago; problems which could wait then, have become more urgent now. With Germany next door, with the Oder-Nyssa frontier not yet officially recognised by the West, Poland is more conscious of the war menace than Czechoslovakia. Every Pole suspects that all the flirting with Germany done by the West may end with the *petit cadeau* being paid to Gretchen out of Poland's pocket. Among the intelligentsia there is an unhappy feeling of becoming, culturally, more and more isolated from the West; and the veto on all foreign travel (except to places like Czechoslovakia) is a source of real discontent.

This is true not only of the reactionary, but also of the liberal and progressive intelligentsia—even of those closely affiliated with the C.P. "Sovietism" in the various Party Lines is rubbing many Poles the wrong way; and though Gomulka has been deposed, there is still pro-Gomulka sentiment in the country. Altogether, there is a good deal of mental confusion in Poland—much more than in Czechoslovakia—and the Government has been becoming more and more alarmed by the encouragement given to all this mental confusion by the Church, which was fairly meek and mild a year ago, but has lately been showing signs of truculence. Whether, as some say, this truculence was provoked or whether, as others say, it was calculated, is really immaterial; a showdown between Church and State was bound to come sooner or later.

Things that would have been unthinkable before are happening in Poland now—for instance, long articles in the press denouncing the Vatican as a capitalist, pro-German, and pro-Nazi State; accounts of mass meetings, not only in industrial centres, but even in an ultra-clerical city like Lublin, endorsing the Government proposals to the Church, as laid down in the statement to Bishop Choromanski, Secretary of the Episcopal Committee, by Mr. Wolski, the Minister of Public Administration, on March 14. Wolski complained that hostile activities against the Government had been intensified in recent months on the part of "a certain section of the clergy."

> A part of the higher Church hierarchy is trying, through pastoral letters and secret instructions, to provoke anxiety and stir up the people because of an alleged threat to the freedom of religion. Such fears are without the slightest foundation.

He went on to say that priests often sponsored various "criminal and anti-State groups," and that the Government would not tolerate such "seditious activities." Only a discontinuance of these hostile practices against the State could create the basis for a *modus vivendi*.

> The Government does not intend to restrict religious freedom. The clergy have numerous rights they do not enjoy even in the U.S.A. The rumour concerning the abolition of religious teaching in schools is groundless.

Wolski added, however, that religious schools would "enjoy appropriate rights, provided they conformed with the laws and regulations in force," and that the "definite relationship between Church and State would be embodied in the new Polish Constitution, and would be determined, as far as the rights of the Church hierarchy are concerned, by the past attitude of the Clergy and the Church hierachy towards the People's State."

Here clearly was a warning. But, still more outspokenly, the Vatican is accused, in the press, of having condoned Nazi atrocities, and of having

only mildly (and never publicly) complained to the Germans of the massacre of several Polish churchmen during the war. The papers also recall that the Pope, in a message to the German Bishops on March 1, 1948, openly condemned the Western frontier of Poland, and the expulsion from Poland of millions of Germans. After denouncing the Pope as "a great capitalist" and as an ally of American Imperialism, one paper, *Zycie Warszawy*, argued recently that, whereas the Polish hierarchy indicated that, without a Concordat, it would be difficult for the Polish Church to come to an agreement with the State, the Poland of to-day was "not interested in a Concordat with a capitalist State like the Vatican."

The line taken by *Tygodnik Rowczechni*, the paper of Cardinal Sapieha in Cracow, was:

> There is no one among the Polish Catholics, especially among priests and the hierarchy, who does not wish correct relations between Church and State; these are in the historic tradition of the Polish nation. But before such an understanding is reached it is necessary to remove the present sources of irritation.

As for Wolski's charges against the Church, Cardinal Sapieha's paper asserted that "the Episcopate has categorically forbidden the Clergy all political action." It went on to differentiate between two sets of problems—those concerning the internal affairs of Catholic life in Poland, and those relating to the organisation of the Catholic Church in the Polish State.

> The former include the freedom of the Church to exercise spiritual authority and jurisdiction, to govern itself by its own law, to determine the form of worship, instruction, and other religious activity within the sphere of its own missions; the right of the Church to establish any direct seminaries, to create monasteries and congregations . . . to establish, in accordance with the laws of the State, Catholic institutions, elementary schools, charities, newspapers, printing shops and publishing concerns.

These questions, says the paper, can be settled directly between the Episcopate and the Government. But, on the other hand, questions like the organisation of the Catholic Church in Poland "can be settled only through an understanding with the Holy See." That is, a Concordat.

The line taken by the new Primate, Archbishop Wyszinski, in response to the Wolski statement, appears to have been fairly moderate and conciliatory—as is, indeed, the line taken by Cardinal Sapieha. Wyszinski stressed that "the Catholic Church had, throughout the centuries, cemented Polish unity," and also promised non-interference in political affairs. But some priests were much more violent in their reactions. The impression one has is that the Polish Government is now accumulating a great dossier against a number of churchmen, and indeed against the Pope himself—the main charge being that they were pro-Nazi. Two bishops singled out for abuse are Bishop Karczmarczyk of Kielce, and Bishop Adamski of Katowice; and the Bishop of Siedlce is said to have given his blessing to an Italian regiment during the war before it was sent to fight the Red Army. Adamski is alleged to have advised Poles in Silesia to declare themselves Germans, so as to avoid deportation and other trouble; he claims to have acted on Sikorski's instructions from London. Like Benes in Czechoslovakia, so Sikorski in Poland is now being "debunked".

We shall see, in the course of this year, how far the Polish Government will find it possible to go in the direction of "taming" the Church. Probably a number of "pro-Nazi" Bishops will be tried. With a good, strong "collaboration" charge one can still do almost anything in Poland. It is also highly embarrassing to the Church to have charges of "collaboration" brought against any of its Bishops, and the State can use, too, the threat of confiscating the Church lands and other Church property as a weapon. At the same time, to save itself a lot of trouble, the Polish Government is likely to refrain from any real persecution of the Church. Whether the fresh arrest, the other day, of Father Kaczynski, formerly of the Polish Government in London, and still with an unusually large number of foreign friends in Poland, is indicative of things to come is still impossible to say.

How many Poles to-day are really fanatical Catholics is difficult to tell. I have been to Polish villages where, in French style, the women were completely under the priest's thumb, but where the men were church-goers—but anti-clerical. "I wouldn't worry about the priest," one young peasant remarked to me, "he gets his 7,000 zloty every time there's a wedding, and his 3,000 zloty every time there's a funeral. And if the corpse is a Party member, his family have to pay through the nose!" As against this, when Cardinal Hlond was being buried, thousands knelt in the mud. But then, in the industrial centres, which, under the Six-Year Plan, will have grown enormously at the expense of the countryside, the Church is undoubtedly losing ground, and, as somebody remarked to me: "Nobody's going to make too big a fuss over the Church if, in the process, he risks losing his job." So the consequences of a serious clash between Church and State in Poland are really unpredictable. But it seems probable that neither side will think it expedient to start too violent a squabble.

Warsaw, April. ALEXANDER WERTH

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

From "The New Statesman" of May, 1924

So Mr. Churchill has turned Tory. For some time past I should not have described him as anything else. The mask of Liberalism slipped away long ago, or was so carelessly worn that the expressive Churchillian features showed plainly through. There was an intellectual process in Lord Randolph's progress from Toryism to Tory democracy; there is none, or hardly any, in his son's slip back to Tory Protectionism. The Liberal period was one of mere dalliance. The lover was once keen, as such lovers are. But he soon grew extremely distracted. The truth is that Mr. Churchill does not think politics. He acts them. They are the mirror of his daily rehearsal of himself.

* * *

Fascism has no future in Germany, at any rate outside Bavaria, the land of its birth. It has already reached its zenith. The majority of the Fascists are quite young men or boys, attracted partly by a love of dressing up and parading the streets, and partly by the hope that the Fascists will do something—the parties hitherto in power having done nothing except make blunders. When they discover, as they soon will, that the Fascists can do nothing, they will desert them. (*Robert Dell*).

* * *

By our heavy restrictions on personal liberty we drive visitors away from London . . . The life of London—the metropolis of the world—can be made infinitely more interesting than the tawdry and fetid "side-show" life of Paris—more entertaining and more cleanly. But directly night clubs and cabarets are opened, the police are inspired to close them, whilst to order a brandy and soda or a pint of champagne after some absurd school-boy hour is made a serious crime! (*Advt. of a firm of Tailors*)

LETTERS FROM TWO ISLANDS

Isle of Wight.

. . . I have just received a letter that congratulates me upon "veering round again to the Conservative point of view. . . ." to which I have replied that I have never at any time held this point of view. (The first writing I ever did was for Labour papers, at a time, before 1914, when there was no power, influence, or even hard cash to be extracted out of Labour.) It is typical of the uncritical "block" thinking of to-day that if you criticise one party, it is automatically assumed by so many people that you must favour the opposite party. We are condemned to live with vast sacred white elephants. But a word or two about British Conservatism. Three different types support it. There are first the people who never really think about politics at all, but assume that Conservatism goes along with using a toothbrush or not eating peas with a knife. Then there are the people, some of whom I respect and like personally, who are by nature suspicious of all change, and believe we must make the best of things in a world that always wants to go from bad to worse. Many of these born Tories are wrongly condemned by the Left as cynical power-mongers when they are in fact essentially dutiful and public-spirited men who happen to be deeply pessimistic about human nature. It is the people in the third group, few in number but certainly influential, who are the cynical power-mongers, addressing the electorate as the Walrus and the Carpenter spoke to the oysters. And you can easily see how hard it is for a party made up of these three types to function successfully as an Opposition. Who is to construct the Programme that challenges the party in Power? Those who do not think at all? The pessimists? Or the power-mongers, who can only say with truth: "Our programme is to hoist ourselves into power again"? Even Lord Woolton, an adroit publicist and, I imagine, an unusually good organiser, can make little or nothing out of such material. He is like a man trying to harness into one pulling team—a blind elephant, a decayed hunter, and a tiger.

No, the Labour Party can have my vote and a cheer or two any time it wants them. But I cannot help asking a few questions. For example. What is the long-term economic plan? What do we do when Everything For Export (plus American aid) no longer works? Are there no alternatives to this building up of the huge State machine, something neater, more efficient and gayer? (And what happens if the machine gets into the wrong hands?) What is to become of our cultural life in a society designed to please Trade Union secretaries and Co-operative Society managers? And why, after reading what the Municipal and General Workers tell the Government what to do, cannot I, as an author, read what the Society of Authors and the League of British Dramatists have told the Government to do? What unique store of wisdom is open to a municipal worker?

But please read with suspicion many descriptions of our life here. Much of the so-called grey austerity, shabbiness, dreariness, that is pointed at to condemn the Labour Government has been a feature of English life as long as I can remember it. After reading some of this faked stuff, you would imagine we lived before the war in a Venetian Carnival. But towns that are dull now were if anything duller still in those days. (I admit, with regret too, that booze was cheaper and easier to obtain then, and that, I suspect, is really what most people mean.) Let

me confess that colour, gaiety and wit are not markedly prominent in the Britain of 1949; but then I have no glowing memories of them from 1939, 1929 or 1919. And I *do* remember the rotting towns of the North, the grey-faced armies of the unemployed, the under-nourished children. No doubt there is a lack of gusto and ripe individuality, but it was not the Second World War but the First, in my opinion, that was responsible for this particular shortage. Of course we grumble, and indeed have plenty to grumble at, but then, as more than one foreign observer has pointed out to me, while we growl away we take nearly everything that is good here for granted. There is some confusion of memories too, so that a man will compare last week's business trip to Stockport with a pre-war holiday in Juan les Pins.

Our trouble is that we drink too much tea. The whole country seems to float on a tepid tide of the stuff. Some kinds of workmen are worse than old women, and cannot be kept on a job for more than two hours without another cup or two. I am told that some large offices have youngsters who do hardly anything but brew tea and hand it round. And it is not even good tea, but just a wash of slops. I see in all this the slow revenge of the despised Orient, which has diverted this Yellow River down our throats.

What you say about so many of our most admired writers is true. They tend to leave out what one may like best in life—affection, for instance. The odd thing is that many of them have—or had—excellent qualities that cannot be found in their work, as if they felt the whole man must not be expressed. The only time I met James Joyce, at a party, he was gay and friendly and sang comic songs at the piano. I never met D. H. Lawrence, but the best accounts of him (and some are very silly) suggest a magnetic charm that I cannot find in what he wrote. And as I remember him, Aldous Huxley brings to ordinary social life a courtesy and kindness that completely vanish when he begins to write. Except in his finest lines, there is a tight-lipped coldness in T. S. Eliot's work that I have never observed in the man himself. Wasn't it Yeats who held that literature was produced by the alter ego, an antithetical self? But, oddly enough, Yeats himself, as man and poet, was more all of a piece than the others, although it might be said of him, for he was nothing if not deliberate and stylised, that he made his life fit his poetry. Shaw has a personal charm, a blue twinkle and a brogue, which apart from an occasional scene is not in his work. Wells left nothing out and wrote like a man packing a suitcase in a desperate hurry. I fancy that Virginia Woolf put everything in too, in a delicate frenzy, with lots of tissue paper in the wrong place. Auden I don't know, but I suspect he has a zest and impudence that he tends, rather hastily, to disguise in his work, pretending they are something else, actually less valuable.

This age business. I see an advertisement inviting applications for "the post of Managing Director of an important London West End Store. Age limit 45." If I were the kind of man who could do such a job, with what bitterness I should regard that "Age limit 45." Ten years too old, and yet I should feel better qualified to do the work than I was ten years ago, for a man learns much between forty-five and fifty-five. And how inconsistent we are! Men in their sixties are appointed the heads of great National Boards. The Prime Minister exceeds this age limit by nearly twenty years, and Churchill, whom the chairman of this company would probably vote into power tomorrow if he could, exceeds it by nearly thirty years. It seems to me monstrous that at a time when we are desperately short of administrative ability, thousands of good men in their fifties, mentally alert and physically as fit as their juniors, should be stupidly debarred from even applying for jobs like this. There are contemporaries of mine, men of wide experience, who ache for responsibility and for tasks to which they would bring more zest than many younger men, and they are left to potter about, while politicians older than they are tell them that the country needs all the skill and experience it can find. If authorship were run on these age-limit lines, what a sad gap in our reading there would be!

J. B. PRIESTLEY

SO THEY SAY . . .

The Naked and the Well-read

To the gratification, no doubt, of its publisher, Mr. Norman Mailer's novel on the Pacific war began to draw the first shots in a barrage of press criticism, favourable and otherwise, a week before publication date.

Sunday Times, May 1:—

A BOOK THAT SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN

The Naked and The Dead . . . is quite unfit for general circulation. No decent man could leave it lying about the house, or know without shame that his womenfolk were reading it . . . incredibly foul and beastly.

Sunday Pictorial, May 8:—

The book is filthy—BUT SHOULD IT BE BANNED?

Evening Standard, May 3:—

SHOCKING? YES!
BAN IT? NO!

Daily Mail, May 7:—

The presentation strikes me as completely honest.

Daily Express, May 5.

It is not that the pages of dirt are shocking—they are just boring.

Star, May 9:—

Anyone who pretends to be bored is dodging the issue.

Sunday Times, May 8:—

Yesterday a letter came from the President of the English Centre of the P.E.N. . . . condemning any invocation of the law of obscenity, "which so patently makes no distinction between pornography . . . and books exploring seriously human experience."

The President of the English Centre of the P.E.N. is Mr. Desmond MacCarthy, the distinguished literary critic of the *Sunday Times*.

Officially Uninspired

Manchester Guardian, May 10:—

At his press conference . . . Mr. Bevin's actual words [were]:—

Whatever is done—if a settlement [about Germany's frontiers] is arrived at at this conference—I think it fair to say it will be the basis of the final peace conference. That does not mean that you arrive at finality but you can't do a thing at a conference like that without it finally influences what the total result will be at the end.

British officials here are inclined to interpret this remark as meaning that Mr. Bevin is reluctant to say anything definite at this stage about Germany's frontiers.

A Matter of Longitude

Daily Mail, May 9:—

French police this morning banned the distribution of *France Dimanche* because of some objections about photographs. . . . The managing editor said: ". . . The pictures we printed seemed harmless enough. There is one of the Princess sitting on a rock looking charming. Any of them could be printed in any paper in England."

Continental Daily Mail, May 9:—

. . . the managing editor said: ". . . the pictures we printed seemed harmless enough. There is one showing the Princess and standing near her is Lady Mary Harvey—she is wearing a bathing suit, but perhaps the picture does not bring out the suit very clearly."

One the Others Did'nt Get

The People, April 24:—

Page One:

What [our famous columnist] does not understand—and readers of *The People* do—is that his reputation is world-wide because he knows them all. They tell him their secrets and ask his advice. When [he] writes about the big names in the show business, he knows. And to-day, on Page Two, he tells, as usual, the stories the other columnists didn't get!

Page Two:

Danny Kaye, to please as many as possible, planned one-night stands this year all over the country. But . . . town halls were too small.

Daily Mail, April 20:—

"I was asked to do a series of one-night stands over here in halls holding thousands of people," said Danny, "but I wouldn't do it. I won't play to more than 4,000 people at a time. . . ."

AUTOLYCUS

CAN CHINA'S COMMUNISTS LAST?

IN a Peiping store an elderly Chinese sidled up to a foreigner and asked: "What nationality are you?" When he learned the foreigner was American he said: "Then I can talk freely," and proceeded to ask the American how long he thought the Chinese Communists would last. When the American refused to speculate, the Chinese declared: "They can't last. Nobody likes them. There is no business."

This Chinese, "Wang the Faker," had formerly made his money out of the tourist trade. A coppersmith, his skilful imitations and repairs had separated many a tourist and art collector from tremendous sums for what were described as undamaged three-thousand-year-old bronzes. He ruefully admitted he was now selling potatoes.

A rickshaw driver agreed that his business is not very good either. "The rich people have run away and other people are careful with their money," he explained, but then added: "But since the Communists came in the police no longer beat us." He added hopefully: "Maybe they will start factories and I can work there."

A shrewd Chinese stated flatly: "Times have changed." He had been a cook but was too canny and ambitious to stay at that long and had become a speculator and money-changer. Soon after the Communists had come to Peiping he gave that up. After reading their literature he sent his son to the Communists' Revolutionary University. Then he started hunting around and found some old Japanese-made machinery. "The Communists want to see production," he explained and made it clear he meant to get in on the ground floor.

A professor said wrily: "We've lost our maid to the land reform." The maid had come to Peiping from the countryside because her family didn't have enough land to support all its members. A few days after the land reform in her village she had given notice because her family had got

enough land to support all its members and wanted her back to till the soil.

These examples will at least serve to indicate the wide range of reactions to Communist rule in Peiping. An extremist reaction, either of violent antipathy or exuberant support, is exceptional. More usual are the various shadings of resignation or sceptical anticipation. There is, however, a small but hard core of anti-Communist Resistance here, including an armed underground. Just before the Communists came into Peiping the 19th Gendarme Regiment was dissolved by its Kuomintang commanders and went underground. Most of its members have resisted Communist requests to register and hand in their weapons like the other troops which surrendered here. The Communists have caught a few and have repeatedly postponed, so far without much result, the deadline by which time their weapons must be handed in. There is real Communist concern over the reported threat that any Chinese leader collaborating with the Communists will be killed by this underground.

The diehard Kuomintang supporters are in large part those who occupied a privileged position under the Kuomintang and expect to fare badly under the Communists: large landlords, former K.M.T. leaders, speculators, some merchants and their families. For the present, their opposition appears to consist mostly of rumour-mongering. Most rumours are simply an outgrowth of the situation here where most people are illiterate and the newspapers present a strictly Communist viewpoint. But many rumours have the purpose of convincing people that the Kuomintang will be back in a year or so. Unfounded rumours were systematically spread of Kuomintang military victories in the South and of the landing of American-commanded Japanese troops in Manchuria.

At the other extreme from this anti-Communist opposition are the exuberant students. Although they are usually from the middle and upper classes, their pro-Communist enthusiasm sometimes embarrasses the Communists, who nevertheless find them most useful as junior administrative workers and propagandists. Of course the hard core of support for the new regime here is the Chinese Communist Party itself, which has impressed most observers by its practical, hard-working, idealistic but somewhat arrogant zealotry.

Between the diehard Kuomintang supporters and the students, Communist Party members and liberals who support them, there is the great majority of people who have not quite made up their minds. In the countryside it is relatively easy for the Communists to win the allegiance of the poor peasants by satisfying their hunger for land. But in the cities the problem of satisfying the needs of labourers, petty merchants and large numbers of unemployed is much more complex in war-torn, impoverished China.

By and large the Communists have made a good impression by their hard work and good discipline, but most of Peiping and Tientsin still seems sceptical. Most people want to know whether the Communists will be able to maintain a stable currency, whether they will be able to open trade with foreign countries. Reforms in the villages have given them volunteers for their army, grain taxes to feed it, shoes and clothes to clothe it and the animals and carts to transport the food and troops to the front. Arms and motor transport have mainly been captured. In a proclamation of March 19th, however, the Central Commission of the North China Communist Party, in effect admitted that the task of supporting the Communists' three-million-man army is putting a strain on the villages.

They cannot afford to tax the villages more for labour power, food or animals without reducing their productivity. And the cities, particularly those which are newly acquired, are not yet productive. On the contrary, cities like Peiping and Tientsin, which formerly were fed in part by American-supplied foods and other foreign imports, are now a drain on the Communists' food supplies and contribute very little in the way of production.

Communist anxiety to secure and train enough personnel to handle takeover problems in Southern China has been obvious to anyone able to read Tientsin's and Peiping's newspapers. A high-pressure campaign was launched at the end of February to recruit twenty-five thousand members in the Peiping-Tientsin area for a "Southward Working Corps" to move in and take over either behind advancing Communist troops or in the event of a surrender in the South. These recruits are being given a hasty thirty-day course in "New Democracy"—the Communists' general policy for this period—and how to administer cities.

People know that the Communists have made good in the country. They are waiting to find out whether they can also succeed in the cities. If they can, they are likely to rule for a long time in China.

ANDREW ROTH

DISGUSTING VANITY

"BEGIN well. Be sure that your opening paragraph is right. Having perfected that, you will have no difficulty with the rest." The advice is sound, but sounder still its postscript: "When you have finished, go back and strike out the first paragraph." Good beginnings often produce bad endings. What could be more enticing than: "Of the excessive and disgusting vanity of men of letters. . . ."? Yet what duller (in this 1809 compilation) than the succeeding anecdotes about Scaliger and Salmasius? Before dwindling to its feeble finish the article offers specimens of poetic compliments.

> Along the shore
> Walk'd Hannah More:
> Waves let this record last:
> Sooner shall ye,
> Proud earth and sea,
> Than what she writes, be past.

Dr. John Langhorne was the author of that. He wrote it in the sand with his stick. "Underneath," we are told, "Mrs. More scratched with her whip, these lines:

> Some firmer basis, polish'd Langhorne, chuse,
> To write the dictates of thy charming muse:
> Her strains in solid characters rehearse,
> And be thy tablet lasting as thy verse.

Ere the tide washed both these tributes away the learned doctor was kind enough to make a note of them.

Authors—there is no doubt about it—have an infinite capacity for taking praise. Grateful at first for gnats, they will soon swallow camels. Encomiums that would make a member of any other trade or profession suspicious—suspicious that he was having his leg pulled or was being flattered with an ulterior motive—are accepted as due homage by an author. (Oh, oh, Malvolio!) What Isaac D'Israeli calls the pains of fastidious egotism never let an author alone. Exhibitionist, he must have an audience; but it is an audience which must always applaud.

D'Israeli, it is only right to say, was not responsible for the compilation to which in my good beginning I referred. The compiler is anonymous, and I have never bothered to find out who he was. His work (in two volumes) is called: "A Dictionary of Anecdotes; chiefly Historical and Illustrative of Characters and Events, Ancient and Modern. Drawn from genuine sources, and systematically arranged according to the respective subjects."

No doubt D'Israeli would have made a more scholarly job of it, but in that case I should have been denied all knowledge of the child who, in 1593, grew a gold tooth, and of the book, *De Dente Aureo*, which James Horstius, professor of physic in the university of Helmstadt, wrote upon the subject. And I should have gone through life without meeting Thomas Topham of whom it is recorded: "His head being laid on one chair, and his feet on another, four people (fourteen stone each) sat upon his body, which he heaved at pleasure." He died on August 10th, 1749, at a public house which he kept in Hog Lane, Shoreditch. "Having two days before a quarrel with his wife, he stabbed her in the breast, and immediately gave himself several wounds which proved fatal to him. His wife, however, recovered."

D'Israeli's own piece, "Genius and Erudition, the Victims of Immoderate Vanity," restricts itself to the case of Janus Junius Toland; but poor Toland was crazy. He wrote 155 books. No normally vain author writes so many. One is enough to turn his head. If, because there is nothing better about at the moment, his book gets some good notices, he is forever a victim of delusions. If it gets bad notices, the result is the same. He is indignant because his masterpiece is not to be found in every bookshop and railway stall throughout the country; and if it is not prominently advertised daily in every organ of the press, he writes arrogant letters to his publishers. Should, by some lucky chance, his book catch on with the public, he is never satisfied with the sales. He complains that he is being neglected or treated with discourtesy. . . .

What a monstrous and wicked exaggeration this is. The average author is almost excessively modest about his work. If it is praised, he is pleased; but he is capable of feeling contempt for the reviewer who praises it extravagantly. If it is adversely criticised, he is not discouraged; but he is capable of judging the critic's ability. If it is more or less ignored, he is not surprised; but he is capable of understanding that he may have been unlucky in appearing at a time when there were so many reviewable authors about. He does not, in any case, make himself a nuisance to his publisher. He never writes in an "instructing-my-solicitor" tone to say that he is placing his affairs in the hands of an agent. He never complains that he has been slighted, or suggests that another publisher would have done better with the book. For any advice or assistance he has been given he is always explicitly grateful, and this whether the book is financially a success or a failure. If it is a failure, he is apologetic; he can hardly be restrained from returning the advance he has received. . . .

But this, too, is exaggerating. The average author is not a saint. He is very much like other men. If he is subject to fits of inordinate vanity, they are soon over. He shares with the rest of us an ability to reconcile himself to the fact that he will never get his deserts. I rather like him, though as a rule he is not much attracted to me. Dr. Samuel Ward, Master of Sidney College, Cambridge, wrote to Archbishop Usher on June 27th, 1626:

> There was last week a cod-fish brought from Colchester to our market to be sold; in the cutting up of which there was found in the maw of the fish a thing which was hard; which proved to be a book bound in parchment; the

leaves were glued together with a jelly, and being taken out, it did smell much at first; but after washing of it, Mr. Mede did look into it. . . . The book will be printed here shortly.

This book was duly printed, with the title: "*Vox Piscis*, or the Book-Fish, containing three Treatises, which were found in the belly of a Cod-Fish, in Cambridge market, on mid-summer-eve last, 1626."

When I began copying out that story it seemed relevant to a discussion of the alleged vanity of authors. I am not sure now that it is. A pity. This article had such a good beginning that I was hoping it would end well. I can add this: the people worst at taking criticism are critics. Ask any literary editor. PALOMIDES

MAURICE MAETERLINCK

LOOKING down the endless list of Maeterlinck's writings, most of which have been translated into English, one realises how his popularity here hung on a very few books—on one book and perhaps a couple of plays. The book, which appeared as long ago as 1901, was of course the *Life of the Bee*. It appealed to a host of readers who had never heard of Fabre, even to bee-keepers; and its delicate exploration of fact was accompanied by those taps on the walls of the universe which echoed through all his writing. To encounter this limpid observation and questioning for the first time was indeed a fresh experience, and I found the companion volume on the termite no less fascinating. The magic had worn off a little by the time Maeterlinck reached the stars, via—if I remember rightly—the "talking" horses of Elberfeld, which stamped out messages in their stables. He was the poet of the minute and legendary; the further he extended his field, the less persuasive were those mysterious promptings. His best play, *Interior* (1894), was originally a one-act piece for marionettes, and its success on the larger stage no doubt encouraged Maeterlinck to write ambitiously for the theatre. He became a "great" dramatist at the expense, one can't help feeling, of a thrilling littleness.

Several of his plays are almost masterpieces. What do they lack? Passion chiefly: it needed Debussy's music to make a masterpiece of *Pelléas and Mélisande*. The symbolist movement, out of which Maeterlinck sprang or floated, provided its own remote pure drama in Villiers de l'Isle Adam's *Axel*, and Maeterlinck's dilution of it, while up to a point theatrically telling, seems both on the stage and in print like adding endlessly water to water. We had our rather empty fill of *The Blue Bird* (it put mist on our Christmas cards for several seasons); *Monna Vanna* thrilled, while *The Burgomaster of Stilmonde* appealed to English sympathies during the 1914-18 war. Half-a-dozen of the plays, including *Interior*, *The Blind* and *Pelléas and Mélisande* are well worth revival if only for the sake of a detonating simplicity of dialogue rare indeed in the theatre. The first two of these have made, for example, excellent broadcasts, and *Interior* seems to me probably the best one-act play ever written. Since so few of Maeterlinck's plays have been seen in England it is rather rash to pronounce against their effectiveness. How far his style, that picks out its tunes with a single finger, will preserve him for future generations I should not venture to guess; at the moment his reputation with critics stands considerably lower than it should. He had written almost nothing for thirty years, and too many of his obituarists, I fancy, are relying on memories that go back as far. G. W. STONIER

The Arts and Entertainment

POLYPHEMUS AT HOME

LET me postpone discussion of the new music which has been occupying our Sicilian nights, in order to celebrate a more cheerful and less controversial occasion. It was a happy idea to include in the Festival a performance of the *Cyclops* of Euripides in the ruined Greco-Roman theatre at Taormina: a stone's throw—at any rate, a Cyclopean boulder's throw—from the scene of the play's action, the cave of Polyphemus on the slopes of Etna. The Hamlet-at-Elsinore principle is no guarantee of success: but Cyclops-under-Etna was captivating as well as appropriate.

There was the usual Italian vagueness about the time of performance, with the unusual difference that it began half-an-hour earlier than the advertised time instead of an hour later. This characteristic Sicilian caprice was a little hard on unforewarned visitors who had come 1,000 miles or so to see the play; but for the inhabitants of Taormina it posed no problem. Like the Athenians, they made a day of it, arriving hours ahead with bottles, newspapers, children and baskets of food. Sooner or later, the *spettacolo* would doubtless begin; meanwhile, one could doze and eat and gossip. For the fortunate strangers who had arrived early, the *spettacolo* had indeed already begun: it stretched from horizon to horizon. "In the distance," says the little Sidgwick school edition of the play, "is seen the sea-coast"; and there sure enough it was, the very coast on which Odysseus landed: league after league of it, visible 700 feet beneath us through the gaps between the Roman columns, curving away southwards towards Syracuse. On our left the immeasurable sea; on our right the hills and castles which protect Taormina; directly ahead, hanging in the sky, the immense cone of Etna, with its shawl of snow and its fat white puff of smoke climbing straight into the evening air.

A sort of grass eiderdown covered the hollow in front of the stage, and from under this verdure, music began to proceed: pastoral music, with no archaic nonsense about modes and no particular distinction; but perfectly in place. A short, paunchy old man, with a long tail like a goat, waddled in, carrying a bucket and a rake, lay down, and went to sleep. This was Silenus, the leader of a band of Satyrs who had become captive menials of the one-eyed Cyclops, Polyphemus. While Silenus slept, five nymphs cavorted in that rather elementary fashion which characterises Italian ballet dancing; and for a moment we seemed to be watching, not the *Cyclops*, but a grotesque parody of *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune*. These otiose nymphs were, however, the only serious lapse of taste; eventually they cleared off, and we beheld the flocks of Polyphemus driven across the stage by a crowd of leaping and laughing Satyrs. This was Euripides at last; and with the arrival of Odysseus and his crew, and the long prepared entrance of "Il Ciclope" himself, the power of the old fable asserted itself. What a splendid monster! Black, hairy, organ-tongued, cudgel-brandishing, Alberich enlarged to the scale of Fasolt, he pleased us all, from the youngest child to the most elegant of the *carabinieri*. About this Euripidean conception there is rather more than simple knockabout and fee-fi-fo-fum, there is a kind of wild poetry: Polyphemus is another Caliban, top-dog instead of under-dog. Gross and presumptuous though we are meant to find his defiance of the gods, Euripides has expressed his proud, independence in richly picturesque speeches, which thundered around the theatre in the Italian translation like some great aria for *basso profundo*. "Straniero, io non pavento i fulmini": in the sonorous declamation of Annibale Ninchi, it sounded almost noble.

Odysseus, by contrast, was a wiry, wily coastal trader, which was just right; unsuitably dressed, however, in a Renaissance tunic and tights, and vocally on the light side for this vast auditorium. For an Italian actor, Silenus is fool-proof: all cowardice, boasting, wheedling and excuses: a precursor of the Commedia dell' arte, a rude prototype of Falstaff himself. And his troop of Satyrs, greasily subservient to the man-eating Cyclops until the cunning of Odysseus puts out the monster's single eye; timid, shifty, prompt to disown allegiance and disclaim responsibility—they strike a still more modern note: we know them well, they are simply collaborationists. Off they go, shouting with joy, dancing around the Greek sailors as though they were long-lost brothers; down the hill to the harbour and the ships; safe, on the right side again.

The *Cyclops* is a little short and slight to stand on its own; but then it was never intended to do so. It is the only complete extant specimen of the Satyric drama: that jocular, Dionysiac revel which relieved the emotions aroused by the preceding tragic trilogy. The only surviving trilogy is the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus, after which one would hardly wish to see a *Cyclops*: in fact, it is difficult to imagine what Satyric subject Aeschylus can have thought appropriate to follow that tremendous cycle of revenge and retribution. For *Cyclops*, the best companion among surviving tragedies might prove to be the *Prometheus* of Aeschylus: that other rebellious giant who "feared no whit the thunderbolts of Zeus."

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR.

THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF BRITISH SPORTS AND PASTIMES

VISITORS to Great Britain this summer would do well to make a special visit to Stratford Place. There, in the building once called Derby, and now rechristened Hutchinson House (how Surtees would have enjoyed that breezy alliteration), they will find the most painstakingly

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English of all our museums. Its aims are not easy to define. Officially it is a National Gallery of British Sports and Pastimes. But what British sport or pastime is depicted in Stubbs' *Lion attacking a Horse* (No. 346) or his *Lion attacking a Stag* (No. 339)? And if, as the Introduction to the catalogue implies, it sets out to celebrate British sporting painters, why claim the Derby scene (No. 177) as the work of "Theodore Gericault"? Particularly when there seems no reason to suppose it was painted by a foreigner. No, the hero of Hutchinson House is not the British sportsman, nor even the British sporting painter: it is that gentlemanly abstraction, the English amateur.

Hutchinson House was conceived by an amateur; most of its contents celebrate the amateur (e.g. No. 448: *Trouting—Portrait of Mrs. George Strutt (Viscountess Malden)* by Frank E. Beresford); and it has apparently been hung and catalogued by amateurs. As the visitor wanders through its Edwardian Adam interiors, most frequently darkened, like the aquarium at Brighton, he is wafted irresistibly to the Merrie England of Mr. Arthur Bryant and Sir Edward German. Very suitably, the catalogue—a masterpiece of English amateurishness—reads less like a commentary on the pictures than a tract from the League for the Preservation of Blood Sports or an advertisement for the Friendly Inn. A *Shooting Party* by Francis Wheatley (No. 84) is described thus: "Rev. the Hon. Charles Digby (a sporting parson of the old school) leans against a tree and offers a partridge to Henry Thomas, 2nd Earl of Ilchester (1747–1802), who is seated . . .", while No. 56, *A Game of Bowls in a Suffolk Village*, by "an Unknown but Early Dutch Painter," is said to be "of the greatest interest, for it depicts the game being played outside a country inn—seemingly the Little Brown Jug, to judge by its sign. . . ." Why Suffolk, one wonders, when the picture in question is a copy, a very bad copy, of a landscape with boors by David Teniers? Gallery upon gallery is marred by the same pretentious ignorance. Even the room so conscientiously set apart for Stubbs displays, besides several authentic masterpieces, a large hunting party which may well be by an earlier hand (No. 119), a horseman (No. 130) copied from a Stubbs engraving (No. 109), and a Spanish pointer (No. 136) which even the most unpractised eye will see should be hung downstairs with the Munningses—its closest companions in date and quality.

This does not mean that the visitor will find nothing to please or interest him. Many of the pictures are attractive, one or two masterpieces (although it is hard to recognize Constable's great *Stratford Mill* (No. 338), priced and spotlit in a tabernacle of pink damask). After all, no other branch of English popular painting preserved its merits so long into the nineteenth century. The theme which in an age of middle-class enlightenment inspired the Wheatley conversation-piece and the equestrian friezes of Stubbs, each in their way more advanced than any Continental painting of their age, retained its vigorous popular appeal long after that intellectual enervation perceptible in all academic painting, not excluding even the portraits of Reynolds and Gainsborough. So it was that when English landscape and portrait painting had sunk into the Chantrey degradation, sport (and to a lesser degree, politics) continued to inspire a host of gifted secondary artists. Witness that virtually English cartoonist Carlo Pellegrini (Nos. 387 and 388), who as "Ape" caricatured all the most distinguished political and sporting figures of his day. Which of his more august Victorian colleagues could have inspired Degas to paint his portrait? But in Pellegrini and his friends the great tradition draws to its close. Soon Edwardian magnates were having their horses painted with a flash and legerdemain more appropriate to their wives. By their patronage and influence, as strong in pictures as it was in the paddock, sporting art became irredeemably corrupt.

The visitor to Hutchinson House will have ample opportunity to trace its fall. There is a Sickert, it is true, but since it can scarcely be termed a sporting picture its inclusion can best be interpreted as a sop to the highbrow Cerberus; for there is no Royal Enclosure by Dufy no street-game by J. S. Lowry, no football match by Anthony Gross. But then, these are serious artists, out of place in an England of country clubs, quiet week-ends and the muddling amateur. So it is altogether more fitting that the National Gallery of British Sports and Pastimes should peter out in a series of nineteen Munningses.

DAVID CARRITT

RADIO NOTES

How many disasters and miseries have been brought about by the human reluctance to put up with the harder pains of climbing down? In its presenting of *The Bacchae* last week the Third Programme gave us the chance to experience again, what we already know—that the incessant and expert sniping by the great Greek dramatists at human pride and presumption has lost none of its power to make us duck. I have never understood why scholars insist so exclusively on the ironic scepticism of Euripides. Of course the exposure of the non-moral nature of Bacchus—the poverty of the motive for which he took his horrible revenge is quite explicit in the play. Yet Euripides' attitude to Pentheus, the mere man (although a King) who struggles to break the power of the God, is also explicit. It is the exposure of a demented and fatal presumption. "Cleverness is not wisdom." If you presume to believe that you can destroy the non-moral sensual forces (Bacchus), instead of acknowledging their place, they will spring up more terribly somewhere, and destroy you. Passion and reason must be integrated, not set at each other's throats. This surely is one application to *The Bacchae* of the point made on the air by Professor Lucas (whose translation we heard), that Euripides had here almost torn through the flowery fabric of Greek metaphor to the abstract meanings below.

The two dialogues between Bacchus and Pentheus—crucial to one's view of the play—came over the air with a greater power because handled quietly. And I was particularly grateful to Mr. Alastair Duncan, as Bacchus, for his subtle half-whisper which made it impossible to mistake the importance of the moment when the God gives the man his last chance of being reasonable. "My friend, there is still opportunity to arrange these things well." And then the struggle of Pentheus with himself, the fear that a concession will humble his pride, will show him up as slave and dupe. He cannot yield, he *will* destroy the Bacchae! Not till he has affirmed this beyond revoke does the God help him to put his reason into the service of his folly. By contrast, the musical stridency allowed to the choruses seemed out of place. And I wish that the producer, Mr. Raymond Raikes, had decided that these too could be half-whispered, or softly intoned or chanted.

"Put in his legs!" "Bind fast his corky arms!" Euripides wrenches out arms offstage, Shakespeare has eyes gouged out in front of us. Radio cannot imitate these violences, and I think ought not to try to. Understating, under-acting; the listener's imagination does all the rest. Alas! Mr. Howard Rose's production of *King Lear* was over-stated, over-acted, and, by the bad sisters, over-*sneered*. Miss Barbara Couper's Regan would have been incredible even on the stage—which allows one to suppose that she supposed that radio needs protracted hissings. How aggravating too was the measles rash of innumerable small liberties taken with the text. "Hysterica passio! Down, thou climbing sorrow!" Mr. Wolfit simply left out "Hysterica passio!" and surely "Sir, I am made of the self-same metal as my sister is" is a poor equivalent for Shakespeare's "I am made of that self metal as my sister." The Kent of Mr. Ralph Truman and the Edgar of Mr. Harry Andrews, were both excellent.

A more topical tragedy was handled with greater success by Mr. W. Farquharson Small and Mr. Graham Hutton in their hour-length *Window On Western Germany*. A first-rate job, clever, informative, and thorough. Their picture of the sudden tenseness in a German audience, when on the stage a young Luftwaffe ace describes himself out on a bombing-mission, fingering the controls and remembering a poem about the moon, was vivid and interesting. "What queer people we Germans are! Guernica! Coventry! And the poetry of Matthias Claudius!"—the young airman reflects. The old, old theme of the German "split personality." But is it quite enough merely to restate this? One would have welcomed an attempt at explanation.

MARK OGILVIE

WHERE'S THE BLOODY HORSE?

What excellent actors we have about at the moment: and what a pity that the present conditions in the theatre can't find a way of making the best use of them. A week, for instance, in which Mr. Walter Fitzgerald and Miss Angela Baddeley opened in one play, Miss Flora Robson and Mr. Wyndham Goldie in another, and Mr. James Hayter and a talented, though comparatively unknown cast in yet a third—this ought somehow to have been a week of excitements. And yet somehow it wasn't: it was one of mild diversions. That only one of the three plays should be a complete miss is by present standards above average, I suppose. But how sad that the failure should have to be the Fitzgerald-Baddeley play, *Marriage Story*, a French piece about a wife and her lover plotting to poison the dear old boring husband. In its transposition into English, whatever point this may have had in the French has been lost. I suspect it was originally a comedy thriller: but it is played here as slow heavy drama, which neither its text nor its frame can support. If acting could have rescued it, Mr. Fitzgerald and Miss Baddeley would have brought it to shore: but they sank with it about an act and three-quarters from land.

Shooting Star, at the Playhouse, because it is placed on the inside of professional football, is said to break new ground. (Which is about as true as saying that *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* breaks new ground because its predecessor *The Comedy of Errors* was set in Ephesus.) In fact, *Shooting Star* is much too modest a little comedy to break anything: it is a well-conducted, conventional little tale with a number of amusing moments, most of them arising from Mr. James Hayter's infectious personality and some from the author's Mavis Pink, a butter-wouldn't-melt-in-her-mouth little girl, who turned out to know exactly what she wanted (Charmian Eyre). The right dinner, the right company, the right frame of mind and a spare guinea or so in your pocket, and this play will round off an evening nicely.

Black Chiffon, at the Westminster, although its dialogue has a precision and point unusual in this kind of play, doesn't pretend to break any new ground. The scene is "the drawing-room of the Christie's house on Chelsea Embankment," and the symmetrical Christie family—mother, father, one son, one daughter—keep reminding each other that they are a nice ordinary average family which, as so often on the English stage, means that they are members of the £2,500 a year group. Nor is the Oedipus Complex a dramatic novelty. Here it boils over for one nasty hour which lands the mother in the police court. She steals a black chiffon night-dress from a large store—an irrational protest against her beloved son's impending marriage. Miss Flora Robson is magnificent in this part. Is there any other actress playing to-day who can suggest so much feeling with so little fuss? With the help of the psychiatrist called in for her defence, she is forced to face for a time uncontrollable impulses, and she leads us with her round the edge of that pit of hysteria which lies at the centre of most of us. So real is her behaviour, so totally convincing the illusion she creates, that we hardly

notice during the play the improbabilities or the skirtings which the play tails off into. They only occur to you on the walk home.

It was on the walk home, too, that I realised clearly just why all the week in the foyers there had been running through my head that epigram of Roy Campbell's:

> They praise the great restraint with which you write.
> I'm with them there, of course.
> You use the snaffle and the curb all right
> But where's the bloody horse?

I realised that it wasn't the complete absence of a bloody horse anywhere on the theatrical horizon that had set this rhyme ringing like a refrain in my head. On the contrary, it was the disturbing presence of one right there in the centre of Shaftesbury Avenue. For what else but a bloody horse, in this sense, is Tolstoi's peasant tragedy *The Power of Darkness*? Written after Tolstoi's conversion, it suffers from the crudity inseparable from any propagandist's work. Its blacks—drunkenness, murder, rape, idiocy—are all inky black; its white—the confession and redemption of the peasant boy—is all halo white. Just the same, it moves by a succession of most powerful and terrible scenes, harrowing beyond bearing.

But what a mild stagey hack-horse has been made of this classic of naturalism at the Lyric. There is a cast of talented actors, including Harold Scott, Sonia Dresdel, Frederick Valk, Stewart Granger and a fashionable director, Peter Glenville. Much talent, money, energy have been expended: but neither talent, nor money, nor energy are enough to get at the secret of this elemental drama when they are combined only with the genteelest realistic approach. Passion, vision, imagination stretched to the very last notch, a reckless intrepidity might have had a hope. The production should have plunged into the centre of the horror, should have reeked of dung and sweat. All it succeeded in reeking of was, precisely, Shaftesbury Avenue.

T. C. WORSLEY

THE MOVIES

"Criss Cross," at the Tivoli
"Miss Tatlock's Millions," at the Carlton

Once again—how often a film reviewer finds himself saying this!—the only recommendable film in the week concerns itself with gangsters. *Criss Cross* is far from being in the top class of such films; it discovers no new territory or atmosphere of tension; it fails to achieve the precise discomfort engendered by, for example, *Act of Violence* and *Force of Evil*, both still running at the Ritz. So well is the convention established that one can distribute marks to any gangster film. *Criss Cross* might earn (out of possible 10's) six for plot, five for tension, seven or eight for local colour, eight for photography, four for character, five for dialogue, with special mention for the sequence in which a samba band holds the eye and ear fascinated while the hero (Burt Lancaster) stares across a crowded dance-floor at the heroine (Yvonne de Carlo). The mixture of suburb and night-spot, bar and hospital, cliff railway and armoured van carrying currency issues, gives an unexpectedly fresh glimpse of Los Angeles. There is a fair bunch of crooks, led by Mr. Dan Duryea, and the scenes in which the gang plots its robbery of the armoured van and carries it out with smoke-bombs and gas-masks achieves a notable tension. The second half of the film (when it has struggled away from some encumbering flash-backs) quickens the tempo considerably; Robert Siodmak's direction is uneven, but he achieves his climaxes well, and everywhere the camera imparts a live touch. This quota of imagination, of style, which one takes almost for granted in gangster films, contributes at least as much to our pleasure as the thrills of violence.

An almost dead hand seems to have exerted itself over what should have been the bright, batty fun of *Miss Tatlock's Millions*. Here are Mr. Barry Fitzgerald and Mr. Monty Woolley in the same film, but what flat inanities the latter has to enunciate in his richly sarcastic tones! Mr. Fitzgerald comes off a good deal better as a whisky-drinking keeper of an idiot millionaire, who bares his teeth in a golliwog grin, is fascinated by cars, and sets fire to the window curtains. The real idiot has disappeared and someone else has to take his place, incurring the family fortune. Most of *Miss Tatlock's Millions* I found tediously unfunny: perhaps after all congenital idiocy isn't the best subject for a farce. There is far more amusement to be had from the Abbott and Costello comedy, *Mexican Hayride*, that accompanies *Criss Cross* at the Tivoli.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

Photographs by Bruguiere at the Focal Press

At the Focal Press, 31 Fitzroy Square, there is a memorial exhibition of photographs by Bruguiere (1880-1945). This American photographer of French origin started by doing experimental work for the American theatre during the 'Twenties. Among other things, he devised, with Norman Bel Geddes, stage sets which were constructions in light. He also specialised in trick sequences for Hollywood films. Bruguiere's photographs are always interesting—graphically. He spent most of his life in trying to extend the frontiers which separate photography from the major arts. But the further he pushed, the more the limitations of his medium revealed themselves. Every photographic device he explored turned out to be a cul-de-sac. These experiments have a fascination, even if now they seem dated: yesterday's *avant garde* usually does. A technical ingenuity radiates them all. Positive and negative likenesses of buildings are imposed one upon another. The same images—a distorted face, a harlequin, a bone—sometimes light, sometimes dark, clear or blurred—pattern backgrounds shot with streaks of light. *Bric-à-brac* the 'Twenties loved, a bust, a hand, a capital—fragments from the off-white days—figure in a series of still lifes. And then we have the abstractions. These again are technically interesting. To obtain his effects Brugiere worked in a darkened room, with the open shutter of his camera directed onto a planned background. Then, with lights of varying intensity, he drew luminous lines across his reflecting surface. In this way light itself was recorded, instead of objects in light. The results are sometimes pleasing, rather as a black and white reproduction of an abstraction by any member of the Bauhaus is sometimes pleasing. All the same, they contribute nothing to abstract art because they lack the vital qualities of colour and texture. One well understands why Bruguiere took to painting and sculpture at the end of his life.

"The Son of Heaven," at the New Lindsey.

Lytton Strachey wrote this play in 1910, but his style and method, as we know them from his later work, are present and mature. The characters—the Empress Dowager, the Emperor, General Jung Lu—have the same psychological reality as the Queen or Melbourne, or even Dr. Colbatch, composed as they are from a mosaic of facts. The Empress, one is sure, did actually order her servant's ears to be brought to her in the tea pavilion, just as one is sure that the Queen did request her Consort to hang the Winterhalters a little higher. The dialogue has the civilised distinction of the later work—and also the lapses into the most glaring of clichés. All this might suggest a "literary" play. But, surprisingly, it is a play of action, both of character and event; like the classical dramatists Strachey was more interested in the behaviour of his characters in a situation than in the situation itself, and for three acts we are enchanted with a display of what one might call "action in speech"; without animation things happen. Then the play peters out. The last act might have been saved if the returned exile Kang could have been something more than a sort of Pekin Fabian caught in political intrigue; he is quite null, and Mr. Richard Longman's horn-rimmed spectacles didn't help—although, like the ears and the Winterhalters, they were probably "a fact." The production is tasteful, the acting will do—though Miss Selma Vaz Dias, as the Empress, only occasionally managed the right combination of Queen Elizabeth and Mme du Deffand.

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EDUCATIONAL PRIVILEGE

SIR,—The insinuations of Lady Simon of Wythenshawe about the way in which Oxford and Cambridge Colleges are likely to select their entrants other than Open Scholars and Exhibitioners ought not to pass without comment. "What," she asks, "are the chances of a student holding a Local Authority scholarship and possessing a local 'accent' against the applicant from Eton, Winchester or Rugby who has a lower examination record?" Colleges may vary, but the following general considerations seem relevant.

(a) The Ministry of Education is encouraging boys to take the new General Certificate of Education as late as possible in their school career. This may mean that Colleges will have to select their ordinary entrants provisionally without any examination record being available at all; they will have to rely on school reports and interview.

(b) In any case, relative examination standard, as the Minister's Working Party has rightly insisted, must not be the chief factor when it comes to candidates below the standard of Open Exhibitions or State Scholarships. General ability and good personality then come into play, as Sir Ernest Barker stressed in a recent letter to *The Times*. But at Cambridge, at least, all undergraduates are now required to embark on a Tripos course, except in the few non-honours subjects, and colleges are hardly likely to accept boys of poor academic ability who may prove incapable of coping with such a course.

(c) So far from their being a prejudice in favour of the boy with the "right accent," there may be a tendency, where it comes to a difficult choice, to favour the boy who has made the most of lesser opportunities. Incidentally, quite a large proportion of Oxford and Cambridge dons nowadays are not old public school men themselves.

There is, however, one important administrative difficulty to be overcome if there is to be real equality of opportunity. It is essential that colleges which have to deal with a large number of applications should be approached in good time. Public school masters generally write soon enough, but applications on behalf of boys from grant-aided schools are often made too late. Provisional acceptance should be sought early, even if the boy may be unable to go to the University unless he ultimately obtains an award or grant. CAMBRIDGE TUTOR

WORLD PEACE CONGRESS

SIR,—Allow me to supplement your correspondent's excellent article about the World Peace Congress from the point of view of one who took part in its proceedings. The five important points about the Congress, I think, were the following:—

(1) The evidence of a real popular uprising in France against the idea of being dragged into another war. The huge rally at the Buffalo Stadium was unforgettable. Three or four French friends independently told me they had seen nothing like it since the formation of the Popular Front in 1936. It is not only the Communist third of France that is wholeheartedly opposed to another war, although that alone is a formidable force; a solid majority of the French people are determined to go to extreme lengths of civil disobedience and even further rather than fight again.

(2) The second feature of the Congress, which unhappily was unique, is that in it representatives of the peoples in both camps met and talked about peace. I wish very much that the Western representation had been broader. But, even with all its imperfections, the discussion between those of us who came from the Capitalist Democracies and our partners in the search for peace from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union was, I believe, both valuable and promising.

(3) The third important point that emerged from the Congress was the insistence, both in its manifesto and in the President's concluding speech, that the common interests of the peoples of the world are far more important than their ideological differences, and that economic co-operation and normal political relations between countries with different social systems is not only possible and desirable, but necessary. The Congress drew the conclusion that outstanding differences can and should be settled by peaceful negotiation and compromise on the basis of the obligations of the U.N. Charter and with the help of its machinery and institutions.

(4) Fourthly, the Catholic Abbé Boulier read out a statement signed by himself and dignitaries of the Anglican, Reformed and Orthodox Churches, a dozen in all, testifying to the common belief of vast communities in both the capitalist and peoples democracies in Christianity as the bond that should unite them in the peace of brotherhood. It was a body blow to the clerics who worship that obscene trinity, Mars, Mammon and the Pharisee, in the Ark of the Atomic Bomb, and whose Covenant is the Atlantic Pact.

(5) The fifth point was the setting up of a permanent body to follow up the decisions of the Conference, supply information, carry out investigations, etc. This could easily become a body for going further into the question of the nature and extent of the interests and purposes shared by the capitalist democracies and the peoples democracies, so as to point the way to enlarging the area of agreement and raising the voice of sanity amidst the crazy clamour of the warmongers and the hysterics.

The latent power for good in the World Peace Congress, and what it represents, could be multiplied and its drawbacks and disadvantages minimised, if non-Communist progressives would be less fearful and suspicious, less afraid of the responsibility of doing something, and less complacent about the awful responsibility they incur by doing nothing.

House of Commons. K. ZILLIACUS

THE LOYALTY PURGE

SIR,—Your article on the John Lewis "purge" is very gratifying. As you say, the line on this matter taken by the Minister of Labour should help deter an extension of this practice.

It must not be forgotten, however, that, unhappily, it is the actions of the Labour Government that are, to a very large extent, responsible for this development. The purge introduced into the Civil Service by the Prime Minister in March of last year has been the signal for a number of acts of political discrimination amongst local authorities and private firms. It is true that the Prime Minister based the Civil Service purge on a plea of the security of the State. There is, however, no evidence of which we are aware that the State has been made any safer by the actions taken and there is a good deal of evidence that in the Civil Service the purge has been applied in circumstances well beyond those prescribed by the Prime Minister.

On the face of it, for instance, it is a crime ever to have been a member of the Communist Party. A number of persons purged in the Civil Service are people who admittedly were members of the Communist Party some years ago. They have broken with that Party on precisely the same grounds as the Government has advanced for its estrangement from the Russian Government. These people have, none the less, been substantially penalised.

In the second place, the purge has been applied to many officers who have not had the remotest connection with work of the secret nature referred to by the Prime Minister in his original statement. On the basis of the Prime Minister's statement, it must be very difficult to justify the purging of a War Office messenger.

In the third place, the validity of the reasons for the purge is seriously called in question by the fact that not one of the persons who have been purged and who are members of the Communist Party have had any evidence produced against them of any act that was in any way improper in the carrying out of their official work. Indeed, it has often been the case that their senior officers have been much concerned at losing their valuable services in the work that they were doing.

Is it not time now that the Government reconsidered its action and put a stop to these activities which are so contrary to the whole spirit of the Labour movement?

The Institution of Professional Civil Servants, STANLEY MAYNE, *General Secretary*.
17 Hans Place, London, S.W.1.

MALAYA

SIR,—I feel that Mr. Wyatt is hiding the real issues at stake in Malaya. Are we to imagine that British troops are kept there solely for the purpose of protecting the Malays? Are there no other reasons why we are spending £30,000 a day in that country?

Why have we got to talk a lot of cant about Communist plots when we all know the real issues at stake? There are £100 millions of British capital invested in Malaya. The income from tin and rubber earns more dollars that the total exports of manufactured goods from Britain. Malayan rubber and tin are needed for American stock-piling. Singapore is of tremendous strategic value. We are at present solving our balance of payments problem on the backs of the Malayan coolies. Let us face up to this fact and say frankly whether we like it or not.

The most important result of the banning of the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions is that strikes on the plantations have been stopped. If any workers start arguing about wanting better conditions the plantation managers are in a position to deal with them. Let us stop talking hypocrisy about Malaya. We won Malaya by the sword, and we are keeping Malaya by the sword. We are in Malaya for what we get out of it. It might not be very pretty, but it is true. GORDON STEWART.
6, Cheyne Row,
London, S.W.3.

SIR,—In your issue of April 30th Mr. Woodrow Wyatt replied very convincingly to Mr. Ross' criticism of his article "Question Mark in Malaya." He did, however, miss one point—Mr. Ross wrote: "The Communists have been excessively moderate in their policy."

The facts are that the Communists up to the end of March had murdered 385 civilians, of whom 260 were Chinese, 59 Malays, 27 Europeans and 39 of other races.

Would you, may I ask, call this "excessive moderation"? W. A. WARD,
Agent for Malaya
Malaya House, 57 Trafalgar Square,
London, W.C.2.

RACIAL ENDEARMENTS

SIR,—As an American trade union representative who has worked with many racial and religious groups in the United States, I am somewhat appalled at the prevalence of derogatory racial terms in the British press. When the Labour *Daily Herald* writes of little "coloured pickaninnies," or the *Listener* reports that a certain radio period will feature a "darkie" show with "coon" minstrels, I shall be told, no doubt, that it is only endearing the child-like, fun-loving, amusing antics of the strange, backward coloured people to British children. Let us apply a degree of honesty and elementary psychology to this explanation, and view it from the other side of the racial fence.

Aren't we consciously or unconsciously planting the seeds of racial inferiority during the pliable years of childhood, and thereby making a long-term investment in the unwholesome racial attitudes of future British generations? Aren't we playing with dangerous and static racial stereotypes to condition young minds, when we should be employing the more dynamic methods of teaching children the primary and noble aspirations of the all-inclusive human race? Are we conscious of the fact that these static racial stereotypes make all Indians, Hindu and Moslem alike, "mysterious slinky creatures" who spend their day perfecting rope tricks and "charming" snakes; make all American Indians "wild and blood-thirsty"; make all African natives "man-eating cannibals and ritual dancers"; make all Chinese and Japanese "slant-eyed Oriental tricksters"; make all Jews "grasping money-lenders and unscrupulous merchants," and all American Negroes "primitive

children of song and dance." Finally, do these obscure and simple little explanations reveal a thought process that seeks some rationalisation for a smouldering Anglo-Saxon concept of racial superiority which finds it very difficult to remain submerged during this critical period of world chaos?

These questions should demand some serious reflection from every British citizen because the explanations of the "lovable endearment" school of thought have a sad and familiar ring. All of us should be reminded of the loathsome fact that it's the little black "pickaninny," with his happy toothsome smile, that grew up in institutional poverty; that was forced into crime and disease-ridden ghettoes; that had his high illiteracy rate planned for him; that was denied the right to vote and the right to decent employment, and ended his drab existence dangling at the end of a lynch rope. This symbolic noose was placed around his neck by a lawless mob who once were children that enjoyed the stories told by their parents of that sub-human species of mankind known as "darkies," "coons," "Niggers," "tar-babies" and "pickaninnies." With their barbarous souvenirs of human fingers, toes and ears plucked from the charred carcass of the ex-"little pickaninny," the mob stealthily returned home to delight their children with funny, rib-tickling stories about "darkies," "coons" and "niggers."

Ruskin College Hostel, ERNEST CALLOWAY
Dunstan Road,
Headington, Oxford.

NORTHERN IRELAND

SIR,—The Ireland Bill proposes, among other objects, the strengthening of the position of the Tory Government at Belfast. That Government has long declared it to be its policy to proceed "step by step" with England in matters of legislation. A couple of years ago, however, when the Trades Disputes Act for Great Britain was repealed at Westminster, and a corresponding measure of repeal was introduced by the Labour Party in the Belfast parliament, Sir Basil Brooke's Government successfully opposed repeal, with the result that the Trades Disputes Act for Northern Ireland is still on the statute-book at Belfast.

At the general election held in Northern Ireland a few months back, the Tory Party, using very questionable electoral tactics, succeeded in eliminating the parliamentary Labour Party there. Now, however, with extraordinary magnanimity, the Labour Government at Westminster proposes legislatively to entrench the Tory Government at Belfast. In these circumstances, would it not be a graceful gesture—might it not indeed be reasonably expected—of the Belfast Government that it announce its intention of proceeding to the repeal of its Trades Disputes Act?

CIVIS

"RED FLAG" WORDS

SIR,—All praise to Raymond Mortimer for his reminder that clear thought demands expression with as much precision as the limitations of language permit. But "Face up to," I suggest, has a clearly different meaning from plain "Face." One may "face (*i.e.*, be confronted with) fearful odds" and run away from them. Only the hero "faces up to" them.

LAURENCE YGLESIAS.
Summerleas, Jordans,
Bucks.

HENRY JAMES

SIR,—I am distressed by Dr. Leavis's suggestion that I have adopted some of his ideas and then used them in some obscure way to show disrespect for his book. This was certainly very far from my intention. Of course I have learnt something from his book; no one can read him without doing so, even if they are often provoked to disagreement. It is possible that what Dr. Leavis said about country houses and *The Golden Bowl* lodged in my mind and re-appeared in a cruder dialect; and if I have failed in due acknowledgement I am sorry. My excuse must be that I have thought what I did say, in pretty much those terms, for a long time before I read *The Great Tradition*. What continues to surprise me is that critics who point out this moral obliquity in parts of James's work do not find a similar element all-pervading; and that they do not find it more damaging.

I regret the lateness of this letter; it is sufficiently explained by my address. GRAHAM HOUGH
University of Malaya,
Singapore.

WEEK-END COMPETITION No. 999

SIR,—Thank you for awarding a prize in your Competition the other day for Greene or Green openings to M. Wilkinson, who is—in the only too probable words of one of my characters—yours truly. I wish you had also given awards to D. R. Cook and N. Wilkinson, because prize money in these days is free of Income Tax. GRAHAM GREENE.
5 St. James's Street, S.W.1.

L.C.C. ELECTION

SIR,—In Mr. Desmond MacCarthy's letter in your issue of April 30th, he states that a Labour majority was obtained by the Chairman using his double vote to appoint a sufficient number of Labour Aldermen. For the sake of accuracy, permit me to point out that the Chairman did *not* use his casting vote.

A. EMIL DAVIES
The County Hall, London, S.E.1.

THE I.L.P.

SIR,—I am writing the History of the Independent Labour Party up to 1918. I have received much assistance from the headquarters of the party, but I should also be very grateful to hear from any of your readers who have documents, private or official, dealing with the work of the party nationally or in local areas. Branch minute books, local I.L.P. publications, or correspondence of prominent members would all be of especial interest. Any documents forwarded to me will be treated with great care and expeditiously returned, with postage paid.

St. John's College, H. M. PELLING.
Cambridge.

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The system has not restricted the customer's choice of beer. Customers are generally able to choose between the 'tied house' of one brewer and another, and hence between their beers. There are more than 2,000 different beers now being brewed by the 500 or 600 brewing firms in the country, and each of them finds its way into some of our inns.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

A GREAT idea seldom gets a free run. The scientist in his laboratory can concentrate on a single line of research and work it to fruition—or to death. In the world of real life experiments are always being interrupted or broken off halfway. Thus, the policy of treating the Germans resolutely was broken off by the French in 1923 just when it was succeeding: and the policy of co-operating with the Russians was broken off in 1945 before the rewards (and difficulties) of this policy became plain. The great question of the future is whether mankind will turn against the scientists before they succeed in blowing up the planet—certainly an experiment of great interest. One idea has had a real run for its money—tried out without restriction and carried to its extreme. This is the idea of the Hero or Superman, the political saviour for whom many Europeans have been craving ever since the time of Napoleon. The myth was launched by Napoleon himself and took his own nephew prisoner; Carlyle preached it with religious frenzy; Wagner dressed it up in musical form for the Germans; and in the early twentieth century practically every writer offered some form of anti-democratic, Superman doctrine.

Twenty years later the Superman arrived; or rather two Supermen arrived, Mussolini and Hitler, Napoleons of the twentieth century, the heroes of our time. Both were pure-hero types, without any of the adventitious aids of their predecessors. Frederick the Great inherited his crown; Napoleon had a background of military success; Cromwell and Lenin rested on a compact revolutionary class. Hitler and Mussolini made themselves. Except as heroes, they were nobodies. Before they attained power, they had achieved nothing; and the supposed class-basis of their rule (Fascism as the last stage of capitalism) was arrant nonsense. Their real supporters were men as classless as themselves, not great capitalists or even the petty bourgeoisie. General Beck said of Hitler: "this man has no country," and one could add—no class, no past, no family. Mussolini had a family and even a mistress: this did not prevent his ordering the execution of his son-in-law. Certainly he sometimes repeated "proletarian" echoes of his past, as Hitler lived on the Greater German rhetoric that he had picked up in Vienna. These were merely incantations, phrases to produce the popular roar; not genuine beliefs, still less the motives of their action. These Heroes believed only in themselves. Like all men in public life, they craved for power. The exceptional thing in them was the addition of intense personal vanity: they wished both to stand in the lime-light and to control the switchboard, to be actor, producer, and playwright. In short, they wished to be God; and mankind having lost its faith in God, acquiesced in their wish.

Heroes are not of mortal clay; that we know of all Supermen from Siegfried to Jack Tanner. We cannot expect them to act according to normal standards or even to notice the human beings around them. But how do they get on with each other? This is the fascinating topic of Miss Wiskemann's book*: the relations of the two supermen. According to all authorities, Heroes recognise each other instinctively: they keep faith with each other, though they betray all the world besides. Miss Wiskemann attributes to Hitler and Mussolini a common intellectual ancestry: she puts all the blame on Nietzsche. This seems to me too narrow a basis; there is little to it except that Hitler once fell into a trance before the bust of the master. It leaves out of account the long Hero-tradition in modern Europe. Mussolini summed up the Latin line of that tradition from Bonaparte to Georges Sorel; Hitler sprang directly from Carlyle and Wagner. More deeply (and this is the sense in the Hero-idea) each in his way expressed the "genius" of his people—a parody, no doubt, as summaries always are, but no more a parody than Churchill, say, is of the British people. One can safely adapt for both Hitler and Mussolini Gardiner's phrase about Cromwell: "the greatest, because the most typical Englishman of all time." Of course both men were lunatics, as Miss Wiskemann firmly establishes of Hitler, though doubtfully of Mussolini (such is her soft-heartedness for all Italians). The point is not of moment. All men are mad who devote themselves to the pursuit of Power when they could be fishing, painting pictures, or simply sitting in the sun. If men were sane, there would be no history. Though lunatics do not follow the rules of sane behaviour, they have rules of their own. The task of the historian is to discover these rules. No man acts out of character; and, as Machiavelli said, a man has only one character, as he has only one face. Hitler's rules and character ran true to a form that is easily mapped; Mussolini's behaviour was more complicated and therefore Miss Wiskemann inclines to believe him sane—or suffering from a duodenal ulcer, which comes to the same thing. There is a more profound explanation; even the Hero cannot escape reality, even he remains rooted in the ground from which he has sprung.

Miss Wiskemann lets us down here. Sometimes she indulges in general speculations about Nietzsche and the Revolution of destruction; more often she sorts out the details of diplomatic history. She never manages to combine the two into a single picture. She sits sometimes at one end of the boat, sometimes at the other; she is never seated securely in the middle. Her failure comes in part from excessive seriousness. She disapproves of such high subjects as Hitler and Mussolini being treated by "witty Oxford dons" (alas! this is not a reference to the present writer). Wit has its advantages: it puts the Hero in his historic setting. The difference between Hitler and Mussolini was the difference between their two countries. In Miss Wiskemann's book Germany and Italy come in too little. They are treated as two sovereign states of comparable importance; there is no analysis of their historic background or (apart from a table of Italy's coal imports) of their economic strength. The coal statistics give the game away. Coal is the most important index of power. Italy has no coal; therefore she is dependent for her power on others, condemned to a jackal diplomacy—or to none at all. The hesitations and manoeuvres of Mussolini were not, as Miss Wiskemann thinks, the results of doubt so much as a Hero's resentment against the limitations of real life—truly, Mussolini was a hero of the suburbs. Vain and arrogant as he was, he yet had the sense to see that Italy could simulate greatness only by hunting with Hitler: he never shared the futile misjudgment of those Western diplomats who thought that Italy could take the place of Russia in an anti-Hitler coalition (a favourite idea of the British foreign office), and he never accepted for a moment the ambition of Italian diplomats, from Ciano downwards, to play fast and loose with Germany and yet swagger among the great. Hitler saw the dilemma just as clearly. He wrote to Mussolini on March 6, 1940:

> the outcome of this war will also decide the future of Italy. If this future is considered in your country in terms of merely perpetuating the existence of a European state of modest pretensions, then I am wrong. But if this future is considered in terms of a guarantee of the existence of the Italian people from a historical, geopolitical, and moral point of view, or according to the rights of your people, those who are fighting Germany to-day will be your enemies too.

Against this profound analysis, Miss Wiskemann concludes: "It was not mere rhetoric to say that one Italian alone forced Italy into the war in June 1940." It is all very well to like Italians better than Germans. Who doesn't? This does not alter the fact that Germany was (and is) the only country on the European continent of Great Power stature; and that Italy could be carried to greatness only on Germany's back. Miss Wiskemann writes as though the Axis was an aberration of Mussolini's; in reality it came at the end of a tradition which includes Charlemagne and Napoleon, Metternich and Bismarck.

This, indeed, is the most curious thing about these Heroes. According to the prophets, they were to be men without a past, beyond good and evil, and—what is more important—beyond tradition and habit. Both Hitler and Mussolini tried to follow the teachings of the prophetic books. They invented their uniforms and their methods of address—Duce and Führer, titles never heard before. They wrote each other interminable letters, which were meant to be the correspondence of gods. Miss Wiskemann quotes a description by Shirer of the signing of the Pact with Japan: "Three loud knocks on the giant door are heard. There is a tense hush in the great hall. The Japanese hold their breath. The door swings slowly open and in strides Hitler." It is like a scene from *The Great Dictator*, except that no one is allowed to laugh. Yet as soon as it comes to practical affairs, these Heroes turn out to be creatures of history like anyone else. As Miss Wiskemann points out, Hitler's ideas were the commonplace of Pan-Germans in Vienna; and only out of sentimentality towards the Italians does she steer away from the conclusion that Mussolini's policy is what one would expect from a countryman of Cavour and Crispi. Thus the history of the Axis is a story on two planes. On one level it expressed merely the personality of two lunatics; on the other it was a profoundly important chapter in the diplomacy of Germany and Italy, the two revolutionary nations of 1848. This contradiction baffled the two Heroes themselves. As the only gods in Europe, they ought to have been on terms of peculiar confidence, faithfully united against all others. This was the impression they tried to give to the world and even to themselves: each believed in the other—Mussolini was hypnotised by Hitler, and Hitler was genuinely taken in by Mussolini. All the same, the pull of real life was too strong for them. Hitler despised Mussolini at the very moment of believing in him; Mussolini knew that Hitler was leading him to disaster, even though he followed him with conviction. Each tricked the other and intrigued against the other though each knew that this was a sin against the Hero in himself. Thus Mussolini encouraged the Czechs to become Communists in the autumn of 1939 in order to make things difficult between Moscow and Berlin; he protected Polish refugees and even hoped that Yugoslavia would be a barrier against German expansion in the Balkans. Hitler kept German irredentism in Tyrol up his sleeve, cut down Italy's share of Yugoslavia after its

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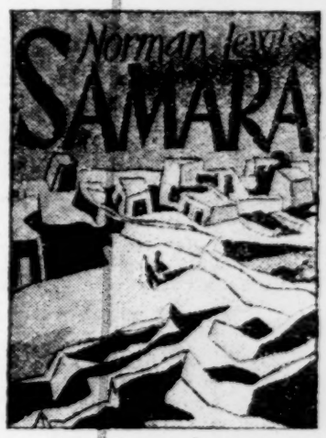

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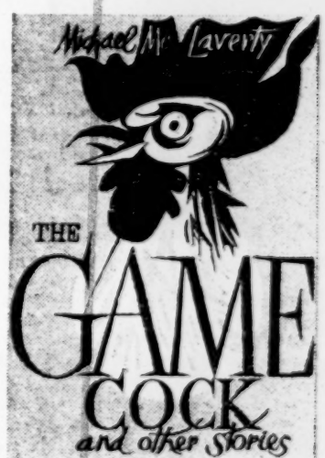

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conquest, rejected Italy's claims against France. As a final oddity, though both were liars without restraint or scruple, each swallowed the other's lies and then was genuinely hurt at having been deceived. Probably each was happiest in the last phase, securely divorced from reality, Mussolini rattling the bones of the Fascist Republic and dreaming of St. Helena, Hitler reading Carlyle and preparing a stupendous *Götterdämmerung*. Both ran true to form to the end. Hitler's last letter reproached Mussolini for having lost the war by invading Greece; Mussolini carried this letter in his pocket to show that he had been the first of the resisters. In these last acts each expressed national character as well as his own—the hard-luck story of the German, the smart intrigue of the Italian. They were a very nasty and ridiculous pair. The worst part of the story is that millions of people believed in them and applauded their every action. No doubt men deserved what they got, when they went around crying for a Hero, a human Saviour, a Superman, instead of making the best of their own virtues and defects. Perhaps the Axis will sicken humanity with heroes for a long time to come. But I doubt it. Despite Miss Wiskemann, despite witty Oxford dons, Hitler and Mussolini seem safe for Valhalla.

A. J. P. TAYLOR

KINSEY'S ARMY

The Naked and the Dead. By NORMAN MAILER. *Wingate.* 15*s.*

Wearily we return to the battle. We thought it was all settled, but the days of the egregious James Douglas are returning and the old silly row about the obscene in serious literature begins all over again. It is sometimes true and sometimes not true that obscenity violates the balance and illusion of a work of art; it is always true that the people who call for the banning of serious imaginative works on the ground of obscenity are the betrayers of literature. The fact that they are sincere in calling for the withdrawal of the American war book *The Naked and the Dead*, does not lessen the betrayal nor does it prevent them from being muddle-headed.

What is exasperating is that this false scent has been dragged across the critic's path. One has to try to hold the book in one hand and keep off the Watch Committee—out for its blood sports—with the other; and in this defensive position it is difficult not to give the impression that a book is all the better, all the more "serious" or "sincere" for containing obscenity. That idea died in the Twenties; it rises in every revolutionary period. But respectable society cannot expect to indulge in two major wars in one generation, without getting a flood of raw documents about what goes on in the minds and comes out of the mouths of the ordinary men who are sent out punctually to these slaughters. Not only that, such wars have revolutionary consequences; the common run of men, not in thousands but in millions, have been brought boiling to the top. One of the results of the rise of the masses and of vernacular literature is precisely the obscene word, the words of the lewd (i.e. low) fellows. Filthy language is used by them as a mechanical ritual and I do not see how any honest writer of the realist kind can avoid it; though in writing it he lands himself with a complex artistic problem and will almost certainly bore his readers by the monotony of his imprecations. All the same, most of us have heard filthy words used with excellent effect in the telling of a story; it is the simplest, most sardonic expression of the angry acceptance of the baseness of the human condition. The American vernacular, like the Spanish, is rich in obscene phrases and the vivid images that go with them. As for the horrors in *The Naked and the Dead*—and there is one particular horror, the account of a looting visit to a destroyed Japanese camp where the bloated dead are rotting and stinking; one of the G.I.'s bashes out the teeth of a dead man because he wants the gold ones—they are far less horrible than Goya's *Desastres de la Guerre*. It is an open question whether a portrayal of the physical horrors of war secretly attracts us to war or builds up a hatred of it; the reaction is really ambiguous, and in a war-like period it is important to know this. It may be, as Havelock Ellis once said in a valuable essay, that pornography enables us to transfer to the imagination what we are in danger, without it, of performing in real life. The case for a wide distribution of this book, not for literary reasons, but for reasons of social hygiene is strong.

But let us get to the book. A bore is a man who tells you everything. That is Mr. Mailer's great fault. With an intellectual grasp which is remarkable in a writer so young, he tells us in 700 pages *everything* that happened to a platoon of G.I.'s, a few non-coms. and officers, and the General in command, during the invasion of the island of Anopopei, an island held by the Japanese in the Pacific. The outline of the campaign is lucidly done. But the platoon were in the second wave of the assault and except for one or two sharp, brief skirmishes in the jungle and one exhausting reconnaissance, they saw little action. Most of the time they talk. This talk is frequently concerned with the jealousies, irritations and boastings of army life, the persistent whining and grumbling of the common soldier, his ragging attempts to keep his end up and behave like a bantam cock; the rest of the time, it is concerned with his sexual anxieties, and this part of the book might be a kind of literal-minded appendix to the Kinsey Report. It is done in the same pedestrian spirit and is as wearying as the repetitive inscriptions on a lavatory wall. Possibly Mr. Mailer went on at such dreadful length in order to absorb, contain or nullify these obscenities; but the fact is that the novel would have been ten times as good if it had been a quarter of the length. We realise that he is an intelligent and able writer. He is alarmed by the cult of power which is growing in America and by the signs of Fascism in a new, and this time efficient form; and he repeats, what more interesting writers have said, that this is the age of anxiety. But, outside of these ideas, which have become clichés in the American novel, and are not handled with much originality, Mr. Mailer has little to say, and the huge length of the book conceals the fact. Compared with important novels about modern war, books like Jules Romain's *Verdun*, or sensational ones like *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Mr. Mailer's conveys little sense of the variety of human nature; he is observant without being discriminating; he has sympathy, but sympathy, after two wars, is not enough.

But, if the whole is amorphous, some of the detail is excellent. Mr. Mailer has learned the lesson which has grown upon us since Tolstoy taught it: that war is the territory of the unexpected. He is particularly good about the fluctuating of the relations of the soldiers with each other. In all these private matters, fidelity gives Mr. Mailer dignity as a writer. (In general, one would say he has fidelity without a sense of proportion.) The portrait of Martinez, the Mexican, trembling, afraid, subtle, murderous and yet innocent, is excellent. The mortal wounding of Wilson, "the fugging machine" boasting about his sexual adventures (very vividly too: Wilson is real) has the unexpected effect of calming the anxious Brown who is tortured by his responsibilities as a non-com. and by the hourly thought of the infidelities of his wife. These observations belong mainly to the brilliant narrative of the reconnaissance, a long episode which is easily the best thing in the book and indeed, if Mr. Mailer had had any sense of form, that is where his story lay. Only one character, Goldstein, the orthodox Jew, has anything in common with the European soldier. Goldstein, is a respectable man; but the point is that, unlike the others, he has the assurance of a tradition, a philosophy of life larger than his own personal suffering and competitiveness. The rest are déracinés.

And that is how the book will strike the European reader. It is less a war book than a report on American life. There are the sex mania—Mr. Mailer never fails to recall the first "fug," the first night, the competitive need to assure oneself by more and more "fugging"—and the obsession with personal success in every minute of the day. Who is going to dominate, who is going to break first, who is going to come off worst and how is he going to make his "come back," who is going to look whom in the eyes: we have the impression of people who see themselves as absolutely alone, and who are reduced to the common animal level at once, on the island, because they lack all corporate sense and all values. As in Hemingway, these soldiers are more afraid of one another than they are of the enemy. The notion of absolute power, as expounded by the General to the Lieutenant he is "breaking" comes naturally to these people; and when they get a lot of power they either go dead, flaccid, boorish and corrupt, like the General's officers; or, like the General, they feel an unaccountable sense of loss and loneliness, which only more ambition can assuage.

I said Mr. Mailer had little to say: that was unfair. He has this to say and, as a diagnosis, it could have been important if it had not been lost in the wilderness of these clever but monotonous pages.

V. S. PRITCHETT

GOYA THE DEMOCRAT

Goya in the Democratic Tradition. By F. D. KLINGENDER. *Sidgwick & Jackson.* £2 2*s.*

To the tidy-minded, the trouble about Goya is that he refuses to lie down in his time. We delude ourselves if we presume that he was nothing more than the supreme war correspondent, noting with melancholy resignation in a sketchbook the progress of the Peninsular War, and just a vivid portrait-painter, settling for posterity the features

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of distinguished contemporaries. To detect nothing more astonishing in the *Desastres de la Guerra* than respect for the endurance of unspeakable suffering in the cause of freedom, or in the portraits nothing stranger than a capacity to capture and retain likenesses, is to limit his achievement to what others with more meagre talents, with less painful struggle, accomplished. The revolution and its aftermath brought forth any number of sincere democrats in the field of politics, and a rich crop of realists in the fields of literature and painting, but almost all are imprisoned in their creed and time. Goya, the unruly patient, escapes from the tidy bed we have prepared for him, back into the seventeenth, and forwards into our own, century. He is at the same time the faithful disciple of Rembrandt, and the fountain-head of modern art. No sooner have we settled him comfortably on the pillows of Napoleonic Spain than we are shocked to encounter one of his haggard, misty ghosts rising from a landscape, transporting him out of his period into Amsterdam in 1660, or into Vienna and Paris before the first world war. The apparition of a Kokoschka or a Chagall among the *Picturas negras* appeals to our sense of fantasy but shocks our historical conscience, in the same way as the discovery of Proustian sentiments in Stendhal might offend as well as intoxicate us. An historical imagination, once the loop in time that makes understanding possible is completed, can dispose of any secondary figures in the past; but Goya, like a few other monsters that break all rules that history sets, continues to elude and baffle us.

For this reason, no single critic can be expected to provide a satisfactory solution to the enigma of Goya, and to say that Dr. Klingender's interpretation is one-sided does not imply a serious criticism of its value. If all students of Spanish painting, each with his own fads and prejudices, were to concentrate on separate facets of Goya's personality, the composite picture would be closest to the truth about him. Dr. Klingender, who is a student of democratic and Communist revolutions in Europe, and is much moved by the spectacle of simple, suffering people taking the law into their own hands, sees Goya as the champion of justice and liberty against a government that attempts to conceal incompetence and corruption behind tyranny. This is reasonable enough so far as it goes. But there is a hint of the demagogue in the author's make-up: he has a political message as well as artistic theories to impart.

He devotes many irrelevant chapters to medieval and Renaissance art and history, but prefers to skate rather rapidly over inconvenient, although significant, aspects of his central theme: the questions, for instance, why Goya continued to employ rococo as a means of expression well into middle-age, long after it had been abandoned by bourgeois painters elsewhere in Europe; and why he accepted so long so many commissions for portraits of prominent politicians and members of the Court, not all of them enlightened rationalists. At the same time, the reader may well be excused for resenting the general impression that the author wishes to convey of Goya in the service of humanity, constantly in touch with the common people of Spain, when we recall that he was cut off to a considerable extent from contact with the world by deafness and deep psychological disturbances. So much of his art demands a more complicated explanation than a call to revolt. Malraux's more reactionary, more imaginative, interpretation of Goya as a lonely visionary, Frederick Wight's study of traumatic elements in the *Caprichos* and the *Desparates*, and, above all, the enthusiasm of Baudelaire, whom Dr. Klingender too disparagingly classes among those "mid-nineteenth romantics," "increasingly isolated . . . from the people," who were "fascinated by Goya's macabre imagery without perceiving that it is but the foil which offsets the radiant essence of his genius: his profound optimism, faith in reason, and heroic affirmation of human dignity and freedom," are necessary correctives to this undeviating but muscle-bound approach.

BENEDICT NICOLSON

BENGAL LANCER

Francis Yeats-Brown. A Portrait by EVELYN WRENCH. *Eyre & Spottiswoode.* 15s.

Sir Evelyn Wrench is gifted with a warm heart. As a result, he is able to communicate to this brief account of his cousin, the well-known author of *Bengal Lancer*, something of his own wistful regret that Captain Yeats-Brown did not succeed in all he undertook. The truth is that Yeats-Brown was one of those people who really wanted the palm without the dust. He went into the Indian Army, though he had no real interest in soldiering as a career. He had flirtations with Yoga, though he never really was able to convince himself of its truth. He tried his hand on the great lecture tour in the United States, though he did not really know how to lecture. He wrote for a number of journals, sometimes with real talent, and he edited one journal out of existence. He wrote—perhaps he was wrecked by—a best-seller; but none of his other books made any serious mark. He had a long admiration for Fascism, which he certainly did not understand in any profound way; and he toyed with its British expression, with still less power to grasp what it was. All in all, he was hardly worth the space and care given to him. He flashed across life in his one glorious hour, when his book was everywhere, and so popular that even Hollywood heard of it and turned it into a film. After that, he lost himself, and the rest of his life was the search to find his way back to a high road which he had found rather by accident than by design.

Some of his virtues were real. He was a man of courage. He loved the peoples of India quite genuinely, though with that superiority which the governing Englishman always displays to a conquered people whose good will he desires. He loved Italy and the Italian people. He had that special lust for adventure which, when united with genius, gave T. E. Lawrence his special place in history. But though Yeats-Brown had talents, I do not think there is any evidence that he had more. He had a gift for picturesque prose. But he suffered frustrations fatal to the continuous employment of the talents he had. He was very self-centred. He lacked tautness of mind. He rarely did anything thoroughly, or made himself more than superficially acquainted with the material in which he wanted to show great qualities. He wanted a faith, but was afraid to let it master him. He wanted to command, without ever knowing that the first need in a commander is the ability to command himself. He wanted most things too quickly to stay long enough with them to get what he wanted. He had a good deal of superficial information, but he had never found the secret of unifying his own personality.

His love for India was the most genuine thing about him. Yet I think that India did him a good deal of harm. It made him feel superior. In his contacts with most people he was liable to display a certain condescension, even arrogance, which was less a cover for shyness than the expression of a frustrated authoritarianism. He was a good deal of a snob. And while he was eager to possess the power to govern, he was never at pains to discover the mind and heart of those whom he was ready to govern. He did not believe in democracy; but the shabby thing he put in its place was not, as he thought, aristocracy; it was an acceptance of the political Al Capones of the two underworlds which tempted his allegiance. He did not even discover that Mussolini never had a doctrine.

Sir Evelyn Wrench has done the best any man could for Yeats-Brown, so that one ends by having some pity for him, even with a streak of affection in it. But he was a second-rate man with first-rate yearnings. That is why his biography is the record of a steady march to a cul-de-sac.

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THE BLAKE WORLD

English Blake. By BERNARD BLACKSTONE. *Cambridge.* 25s.

Yet another book on Blake, but Dr. Blackstone's is doubly justified. It is a labour of devotion, but it is also a work of scholarship, comparable with Mr. Basil Willey's admirable books on the seventeenth and eighteenth century backgrounds. Dr. Blackstone has followed Professor Willey's method in mapping out the background not of a century but of a particular mind. This is a valuable way of studying Blake, who, as a highly independent and original thinker, was inclined to formulate his ideas in opposition to current trains of thought, a fact that can be overlooked by the critic who looks for affinities and sources. To find the latter we have to look far afield, and off the ordinary maps—into the Kabbala, Boehme, Gnosticism, Hindoo religious literature, Swedenborg; but his antipathies were close at hand, being, in fact, those chiefly responsible for the main current of post-Renaissance rational and scientific thought. Blake was not opposing particular aspects of his civilisation, but questioning its whole basis.

As the title of this book suggests, Dr. Blackstone's special concern is with Blake's place in the English tradition of philosophic and scientific thought, as represented, above all, by that three-headed Cerberus familiar to all readers of Blake, Bacon, Newton and Locke. There are some subsidiary heads to the monster—Reynolds, Bishops Watson and Thornton, not to mention Plato and the Ancient Greeks (seen, of course, through Augustan eyes). All these, besides Berkeley, Tom Paine, and Milton, with whom Blake was more or less in sympathy, must be kept clearly in mind if we are to understand the full force of his differences from them. Dr. Blackstone has sifted the writings of Bacon, Berkeley and the rest for key passages that throw into relief Blake's highly original ideas. This particular piece of work he has done thoroughly, or once and for all, in a way that must earn him the gratitude of all Blake scholars.

Dr. Blackstone has a natural understanding of Blake's tendency to differ. Blake's patron, Hayley, in a letter to a friend tells in all good faith how he and Blake are reading Cowper's translation of Homer together. It is typical of Blake that his own account of the incident should be in a characteristic epigram:

> Thus Hayley on his Toilette seeing the sope
> Cries "Homer is very much improved by Pope."

"How much of Blake's later castigation of Homer and the Greeks," Dr. Blackstone very pertinently asks, "owes its virulence, we wonder, to memories of these half-hours with the best authors?"

It is characteristic of Blake that in great things and small he respected no external authority whatever, but judged the world uncompromisingly in the light of his own vision. Milton was to Blake what Virgil was to Dante, but that did not prevent him from haling Milton's spirit back from eternity to rectify the errors of *Paradise Lost*. And although Jesus was for Blake the supreme incarnation of the Divine Humanity, he did not hesitate to tell Crabb Robinson that Jesus ought not to have allowed himself to be mixed up with politics. He was above all a prophet, and as such had more to teach the world than to learn from it; and Dr. Blackstone leaves us in no doubt that his detection of the fundamental weaknesses of the philosophers with whom he disagreed were brilliantly to the point.

Dr. Blackstone is concerned with more than a comparative study of Blake's ideas; he does not hesitate to state his belief that Blake is "the great teacher of the modern Western world." This is a tremendous claim, but it is one from which few who have studied Blake deeply will disagree. But it is also a dangerous claim—no one detested cults more than Blake did, or realised more clearly that the new truth of to-day becomes the boundary that must be passed to-morrow. But Blake was, as his friend Oliver Finch said of him, "a new kind of man," and the pattern, perhaps, for this age. For he believed that the whole basis of modern European civilisation—reason and morality—must go. Reason (in so far as it sets out, like Milton's Messiah, to rule the other human faculties) is, in Blake's view, the agent not of order but of disorder, because it makes chaos of the actual pattern of the human psyche, which is non-rational—a fact that we have been compelled to realise in the century of psycho-analysis, but which was a possibility undreamed of in the days of Bacon, Newton and Locke. The essence of Blake's belief is that

> the jettisoning of morals does not lead to chaos. An outer artificial rule is replaced by an inner organic pattern . . . in Blake's view sin is nothing other than the destruction of *order*, and reason divorced from imagination is the agent of that destruction.

This is indeed the great question at issue for the twentieth century. Is there an order within the mind to take the place of the external orders and authorities of the past? As all forms of external authority have crumbled or been dynamited, "men are faced with chaos, unless they begin to look where the sages have always told them to look: into their own minds."

That is a fair enough statement of the modern religious predicament. The French existentialists have taken a preliminary look into the darkness, and have seen, as one would expect of French rationalist philosophers at the end of their tether, only a terrible *néant* in which man's acts are arbitrary and futile gestures. But the decisive spiritual act, that may stand perhaps as the precedent for our age, was made by Blake when, in defiance of his angel of reason, he plunged into that *néant*—"a void boundless as the nether sky." In that seeming chaos on whose verge we stand to-day Blake was to discover the true human order, the lost Eden, a world where everything "tastes of eternity." It is the crucial turning inside out of a falsehood that has lasted for centuries.

The really original material of this book occupies little more than half the space, and Dr. Blackstone could well have reduced its length. Blake's life is well known, and the small amount of new material that Dr. Blackstone has to add—like the interesting suggestion that the *Island in the Moon* is satirising not Mrs. Matthews' tea parties, but the Lunar Society of Birmingham—might have gone into a few long notes. There is little that is new in the commentaries on the myths, and in a book chiefly concerned with Blake's philosophy much of this might also have been left out. But Blake scholarship is at an awkward stage, when it is difficult for an author to decide how much knowledge he can assume in his readers. And any student of Blake will sympathise with the author who feels that the best way to tidy up his own ideas of the myths is to write a book about them; for the end of the golden thread that Blake gives us is, as Dr. Blackstone says, a very tangled skein indeed.

But if Dr. Blackstone might have shortened his book with advantage, nowhere does he falsify or distort. He stands among those critics who have seen Blake for what he is. KATHLEEN RAINE

STUDIES OF MARKET IMPERFECTIONS

Overhead Costs. By W. ARTHUR LEWIS. *Allen & Unwin.* 15s.

Professor Lewis has given this collection of brief, incisive essays a title which is needlessly repellant to the general reader and does less than justice to their topical interest, socially and politically. For though "fixed costs," whose anatomy he dissects in a fairly stiff introductory study, represent a difficult element in the problem of determining, from the aspect of social welfare, either optimum output or the "right" price, the questions to which he addresses himself are much wider than those involved merely in overheads. His concern is really with the tendency of the imperfect market to create conditions of monopoly or, at least, oligopoly in the free enterprise sector of the national economy, and with the bearing of that tendency

on the still unresolved problem how public corporations, in a welfare State, are to be democratically administered and controlled, and on what basis their price-policy is to be formulated.

It is possible to infer that Mr. Lewis approaches political issues from the standpoint of a Socialist, but, writing as an economist who breathes the bracing, individualist air of Manchester University, he holds uncompromisingly—so far as the sector of free enterprise is concerned—the classical view that price should equal marginal costs, and that competition has its virtues. From this angle he argues convincingly against the illegitimate paraphernalia—quotas, price-rings and boycotts—with which contemporary trade associations have armed themselves; he views critically the operations of the shipping "conferences" in stabilising freights; and his remedy for "excess capacity" in retailing is, not restriction of entry, but—short of the Utopian solution of monopoly for the Co-operative societies—legislation to make price maintenance of branded (and wastefully advertised) goods illegal. On similar grounds he detects dangers of economic waste in the temptation to restrict public road transport involved in the Government's present obligation to make railway accounts balance in spite of an inheritance of over-capitalisation. Rightly, in my judgment, he would have the Treasury write off the excess which, for reasons of political expediency, was paid to railway stock-holders. Only when nominal capital is brought into line with earning capacity can the administrations of the nationalised railways and road transport undertakings make sense of rate-fixing.

When he comes to the general question of the relationship between consumers and nationalised industries, Mr. Lewis ventures a bold assertion with which I, for one, am in full agreement. Conceding that the social revolution has little meaning when "in practice, the Minister appoints a Board, headed by Lord X and including a galaxy of anti-socialist names, [and] tells them to get on with the job," he rejects the conclusion that the problem would be solved merely by appointing men of different political complexion. The real trouble is that we have, even now, not abandoned sufficiently the original disastrous principle that public corporations should be "independent." It is true that members of the National Coal Board, for example, enjoy sovereignty more qualified than that of the Governors of the B.B.C.; they are appointed by, and can (in theory, at least) be dismissed by the Minister. But can it be said that adequate steps have been taken to make either the N.C.B. or the Railway Executive properly accountable to the public—consumers and employees alike—or to ensure that their charges are fixed correctly (in terms of economic advantage) and that all their operations are efficient?

Mr. Lewis concludes, and many will concur in his conclusion, that we have no such assurance. What is needed? His answers are (i) that, in order to ensure efficiency, Consumers' Councils, strengthened by competent full-time staffs, must have access to much more detailed cost-accounts than those now made public; and (ii) that, in the case of every nationalised industry, consumers should have the right of appeal, in the matter of prices, to an expert body analogous to the Railway Rates Tribunal. Both suggestions seem to me sound, so far as they go; they would at least be an improvement on the present situation in which the range of costs in individual pits is a dark secret, and there is an obvious possibility of one nationalised industry bolstering-up, or (alternatively) battening on another by arbitrarily weighting its charges.

Some large problems however, at which Mr. Lewis barely glances, remain to be faced. On the assumption that general directives both as to production targets or availability of services and as to prices or charges remain a Ministerial responsibility, by what test is Parliament to judge the wisdom of the decisions? At what level of costs does winning coal become uneconomic in a welfare State? On what basis is society to grant or reject demands for an improved status by the workers in a publicly controlled industry? What conditions can be held to justify subsidising particular groups of consumers or special areas of population? On these and other cognate questions Mr. Lewis's shrewd analysis and sound common sense would be welcome.

AYLMER VALLANCE

TRAGICOMEDY

The Modern Theatre. By ERIC BENTLEY. *Robert Hale.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Parables for the Theatre. By BERTHOLD BRECHT. *Minnesota and Oxford University Press.* 20*s.*

In any serious consideration of the modern theatre (and seriousness is Mr. Bentley's besetting virtue) we are almost bound to begin with naturalism *versus* its opposite. The opposite has no name. Mr. Bentley sometimes calls it non-naturalism but, more positively, what is it? A return to tragedy, the poetic play, opera—or just *theatre?*

What this book seems to me to prove unintentionally is that the issue is unreal. Take two plays of M. Sartre's analysed here, *Vicious Circle* and *The Flies*. The first is a savage parody of the fashionable form, a drawing-room comedy in hell. The other is a Greek tragedy turned upside down, in modern slang but with Greek costumes, all the tricks of the Vieux Colombier stage, and perhaps there is an ironic glint in the chief electrician's eye. In either case the result is theatre. And since the playwright is technically adept we stay behind to discuss not how he does it but what he is trying to say. I am reminded of a passage in which Mr. Bentley claims both Ibsen and Chehov used naturalism only as a pretence. Each, he says,

> wishes to establish an ironic relation, a tension between the surface and the substratum of his art.

Rosmersholm and *The Cherry Orchard* made use of the current mode ironically much as in an earlier day Webster, as his prefaces tell us, made use of the current mode grumblingly.

The point comes out sharpest in Mr. Bentley's treatment of Strindberg. At the end of a good account of the mad genius in the china shop he sums up:

> The role of such a genius is not only to break with the past but also to salvage those traditions that are still living . . . . Strindberg broke with many traditions but two—the two we have already found most important in the nineteenth century—he handed on, renewed, to the twentieth. These are the traditions of naturalism and non-naturalism, the theatres of the outer and of the inner eye of objectivity and subjectivity, realism and fantasy.

Mr. Bentley adds somewhere a phrase to distinguish between Stringberg's use of the two techniques—duets against naturalistic settings (*Miss Julie*, *Creditors*, *The Father*) which are "intellectual duels to the death"; and, on the other side, solos against an expressionistic setting like *The Ghost Sonata*. There are two corresponding themes: one is man against man, or, better still, woman against man; the other is man against himself, against his past, his conscience and perhaps his God. Strindberg called *Miss Julie* "a naturalistic tragedy," but *Creditors* he called "a tragicomedy."

There is nothing new in that of course. The mixed form has been favoured ever since the English theatre existed, as Polonius knew. Perhaps when Strindberg adopted the term tragicomedy he was reacting against Ibsen who surely made a good shot at restoring pure tragedy in *Rosmersholm*. That is its strength and where it breaks down. Ibsen had stripped the action nearly to essentials, but in *Creditors* Strindberg went further—only three characters in a full-length play of a single scene without pauses or act divisions. He explained in a preface:

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So his play runs on without interval like a film.

And hereabouts we come to a minor crux in the modern theatre. Most people would agree that Strindberg's intensity in either form, solos or duets, went too far and defeated itself. Something of the kind bothers the audience watching Ibsen, an intensity like that of the tin chapel. At first you might think it springs from naturalism, and therefore non-naturalism is the answer, but, as Mr. Bentley shows, Strindberg and Wagner both exposed this fallacy. The fervour can be just as hysterical in music drama and spook sonata.

It is at this point that Mr. Bentley introduces his own chosen hero, whom he also translates, Herr Berthold Brecht. Herr Brecht in theory (but not in practice) sets himself against stage illusion as such. He calls it "sweaty." He proposes to introduce commentators amongst the audience to help us "to cool off." Let us keep our dignity, he seems to say, and keep out of the tin chapel. The attitude is both aesthetic and moral, form and content pose the same problem. If Aristotelian tragedy exposed the grandeur of the moral law, modern tragicomedy exists to question its basis. Of course the questioning may lead to a new proof; Herr Brecht thinks it will, but doubles like a hare to avoid moral earnestness. In one of his theatre parables, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, justice becomes a Groucho Marx, a ribald judge who wisecracks us into philosophy and out again.

By now I ought to have made the point that Mr. Bentley's book is provocative and deep. I prefer its American title, *The Playwright as Thinker*; the author changed it because it suggested his interest was as academic as it sometimes is. In a final chapter *The Alternative to Broadway* he plans a forbidding future, a group of Little Theatres in university towns plus (as extra-mural activity) a few people's theatres engaged in popular education. Given this devout consummation Broadway and all that, he thinks, can go hang.

This is what happens when you think of the theatre without the actor, this is the death it dies. Mr. Bentley has a wise remark about Shaw, Wilde and Pirandello:

> All three in their different ways have achieved great comedy by playing an ironic counterpoint against one of the stock tunes of commodity theatre.

But this is what Ibsen, Strindberg and Chehov did too. So long as "commodity theatre" is the rule this is perhaps the only mode of existence of "good theatre."

"*Good theatre!*" many will say, "ah, there's the point." Against Mr. Bentley and Uncle Tom Cobley and all I shall go on arguing that good writing and good theatre are the same thing. Where Farquhar acts better than Congreve he is writing better. Truth, grace, economy of means, the surprise of the inevitable, these are the writer's virtues as well as the actor's. In a world of commodity literature and commodity theatre they exist as an opposition. In the long run they make the commodity sell but they are what the salesmen fear. Opposition is no use if it deserts the field and takes to the campus.

MONTAGU SLATER

BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

Edwardian Heritage. A Study in British History, 1901–1906. By WILLIAM SCOVELL ADAMS. *Muller.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Adams's mixture of merits and defects makes it not very easy to review his book both honestly and fairly. It is a brightly written, not unintelligent account of the chief political and social events of the reign of Edward VII. Its brightness, and to some extent its method, derive from Lytton Strachey. The bare fact, with a sting in or under its tail, the devastating quotation, the innocently sub-acid comment are all used with considerable skill and discretion. These by no means to be despised frills do not obscure a background of very considerable knowledge. Mr. Adams has read intensively and extensively almost every book, pamphlet, and paper which could throw light upon political events, whether above or below the surface. He uses them intelligently, quotes them skilfully, and gives his references in footnotes. His is therefore a serious and well-documented book. It is both informative and readable and it can be recommended to anyone who wishes to learn or be reminded of the series of political events during a period of six years which was a kind of historical breathing space between two great eras, the era of nineteenth-century security and the era of twentieth-century cataclysm.

As a record of events the book is always good, and sometimes very good. As a study of history it is unsatisfactory. A study of history must be concerned with cause and effect, and if Mr. Adams's subtitle had been an accurate description, he would have left us with some idea of how the seeds sown in the period between 1901 and 1906 produced the harvest of 1914–1949. This too is what he leads us to expect from him by printing as a half-title at the beginning of his book the quotation from Hosea: "For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind." Presumably he means that the wind was sown in the reign of Edward and we reaped the whirlwind, as the Edwardian heritage, in the reigns of George and his successors. But his promises are not fulfilled. The causal connection between the sowing and reaping is not traced for us—indeed I am left in some doubt what Mr. Adams thinks was sown and what reaped. In chapter after chapter he deals with subject after subject chronologically, e.g., population, defence, education, the search for allies, imperialism, Chamberlain's tariff campaign. But there is no vision of the period as a whole, of the gathering of one of the great tidal waves of history. Each subject is treated almost in isolation so that he himself seems to forget in one chapter what he has said in another. This probably accounts for his unfortunate habit of repeating himself; for instance, on pages 151 and 152 there are three passages which are repeated almost word for word on pages 186, 188, and 189; the list of six professors who declared against Chamberlain is given in Chapter XXIII and again in Chapter XXIV; and Disraeli's prophecy about protection and the working classes is quoted in Chapter XIV and again in Chapter XXIII. It is, finally, strange that in a book so meticulously documented as this Alfred Lyttelton's name should be consistently misspelt.

LEONARD WOOLF

NEW NOVELS

Time Will Darken It. By WILLIAM MAXWELL. *Faber.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

The City and the Pillar. By GORE VIDAL. *Lehmann.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The Return of Erica. By LOUISE DE VILMORIN. *Hamish Hamilton.* 6*s.*

Time Will Darken It is a novel, written by an editor of the *New Yorker*. This is no mere scamped "slice of life" masquerading as a novel, but a little study of a marriage, without any i's dotted or t's crossed. For grown-ups, in fact, and very enjoyable.

We are shown nine months in the life of Austen King and his wife Martha, the nine months during which Martha is carrying her second baby. The story starts with her first knowledge of the baby's conception and ends just after the birth.

Austen is gentle, unselfish, and allows people to trample all over him, and yet, all the same, he manages to impose his pattern of life upon his wife Martha against her will. Although she is feeling ill with her new pregnancy, Austen manages, out of kindness, to invite a horde of relations, the Potter family, to make a prolonged stay in the house. (The Potter family live down in the deep South and have to find a place annually in which to park themselves during the summer months.) Martha is furious. Naturally! And yet it is not quite like that—not so simple. For the virtue of the book is that it shows us that such

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situations are in reality infinitely complicated. After hearing the whole history of the Potters' visit, and of Austen's courtship of Martha and their subsequent relationship, one is hard put to it to say which of the two, Austen or Martha, is the weak nature, and which the power-monger. On the face of it Martha is a little beast, and Austen a touchingly sweet-natured sufferer. And yet one keeps wondering. It is certainly the measure of the authenticity of Maxwell's talent that though one can stop and puzzle over the meaning of these people's characters—can doubt even if the author himself has set the thing down straight—yet one never doubts the reality of the people themselves, and of their little world. Though perhaps only the two main characters are really in the round, and the others all more or less blocked in, still Maxwell has undoubtedly captured the smell and feel of reality.

Incidentally the book has one of the most entertaining studies of a young woman in love I have read. Norah Potter's ecstasy (she is in love with Austen), so deeply felt, so hopelessly out of touch with reality, so much the very stuff of life, yet so comical, and ludicrous, and so boring to its victim, is a very nice piece of writing indeed. It is a pity that Maxwell writes in colloquial American in his text, however. The style is not slangy, but it is not quite pure. And his is the type of sophisticated European mind that needs a really sensitive medium. Fine emotional response in the reader must always be blunted by the imprecise and slovenly lingo that obtains in conversational American or English.

Gore Vidal is a well-known young American novelist. He here describes (in *very* colloquial American) the development of a homosexual, Jim Willard, whom we first meet at high school.

Jim Willard refuses to face the unwelcome fact of his own sexual inclinations for a long time. In the end he has to admit it. One must say that Mr. Vidal's treatment of Jim's love for his friend Bob is no different from any other young American author's colloquial treatment of any normal love affair. I class this book as documentary (however that is a somewhat personal judgment). The subject being a young man's sexual development and its attendant problems. Mr. Vidal's writing is not at all up my street, but from this story one learns interesting things, and I think we ought to give both author and publisher our respectful gratitude for breaching literary territory against which there is still such a mistaken prejudice.

Mr. P. H. Newby was last week, on the air, inquiring what kind of literature we are going to get in Heaven. Beside all the music and the architecture, he said, what books will there be to read? And what kind of books will be written? This is certainly something of a puzzle. But funnily enough I believe I have the very type of thing by me here this week! It is, from what I can gather, absolutely the ticket. Not perhaps a first-class ticket (I am not saying that Bunyan, Dönne or Hopkins will spend much time over it), but for the ordinary run of angel *The Return of Erica*, by Louise de Vilmorin, is—what shall I say . . . so *right*.

There is, in this love story of a French village clockmaker's daughter, what you might call a kind of holy shrinking from all things earthly. I don't suppose, for instance, that from beginning to end there is one unpleasant or ignoble thought or feeling on the part of a single character. The angels will like *that*. Sweet Erica Dullum, so tender and beautiful, has a doting father, a widower, whom she adores, and from whom she cannot bear to tear herself away in order to marry the man of her choice. Open a page at random in this book and you are sure to see something like this:

> " . . . Father, darling. And you, are you glad to have me?"
> " Ah! Erica, my child, my pearl, yes I am glad, and we are happy, aren't we?"
> "My darling child, my beloved little flower. . . ."
> " My bunch of flowers, my lovely one. . . ."
> " Kiss me again, dear Father."
> " Kiss me again, pearl of my heart."

Finally the unfortunate girl is so torn between her love of these two men—a mysterious stranger and her beloved father—that she throws herself into a lake, and so disappears from the land. However, there, some years later, her father discovers her spirit, which has made its habitation at the bottom of the lake. He then persuades Erica to return to live with him. She does so, but she returns to live with him *at all ages!* His cottage becomes filled with flitting forms of Erica: Erica the schoolgirl, Erica the small child, and there is even a baby in a cradle, also Erica.

I speak unkindly, but the story itself is really a very good one. Had it not been told in The Voice Beautiful, one's fur would not have stood so on edge. But the whole feeling of the thing is so *exalté* and far removed from this earth. It is suggested on the dust cover that it is a fairy tale. I wonder. Things do not proceed quite so harmoniously in fairy tales surely? You never know when you aren't going to be sat down suddenly to a supper of mouses' snouts and speckled frogs on spits, washed down with hemlock, or something of that kind. And, unlike these French villagers with their hearts of gold, the guests are apt to be unpredictable! All sorts turn up—Grave pigs, Hell horses, Church grims, trolls without any backs to them—and shamble in uninvited, not to mention the usual crowd of mermaids, witches, girls without feet, dogs with eyes as big as cartwheels, of course. Furthermore the behaviour of fairy story characters is often most boorish and lamentable, and if the bridegroom himself doesn't find that he is hopping away at the finish in the guise of some nauseous toad or bat, he may count himself fortunate.

No, take it away, Angels. It's all yours.

JULIA STRACHEY

Roof Bosses in Medieval Churches. C. J. P. CAVE. *Cambridge.* 35*s.*

This highly specialised study has a much more general appeal than might be supposed. The roof bosses are pretty things in themselves, some of them are indeed extremely beautiful, but it is their frequently curious subject matter which is so exciting. The bosses are the keystones of the vaulting ribs in a church roof, and for various technical reasons had to be worked after they had been put in position, 60, 70 or more feet above the ground. Since any detail would be very hard to distinguish at that height in a good light, and since the position under the roof meant that they were very frequently in shadow, the carvers had a fairly free hand. It is interesting to see how often they took their chance of introducing jocular vulgarities or such teasing blasphemies as little grimacing devils under saintly beards, and fascinating to see how often they brought in the face of the last of the old pagan gods. This face, with leaves sprouting from the corners of its mouth, its eyelids, eyebrows, and ears, looks down from obscure points in the noble roofs of Exeter, Hereford, Worcester, Tewkesbury, Norwich, Ely, Winchester, and Canterbury, as well as from the ceilings of many parish churches, clearly recognisable as something unchristian, and as clearly closely related to the leafy bust of Virbius which formed part of the sacred apparatus in Diana's grove at Nemi. Mr. Cave's excellent photographs of this sometimes beautiful but always sinister intruder must inevitably stimulate the reader with an interest in the medieval mind. The scholarly text is a model of clarity and exactness without pedantry, and the book should delight all those who take pleasure in this country's Gothic art and architecture.

Geology and Scenery in England and Wales. By A. E. TRUEMAN. *Pelican Books.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

Geology nowadays presents a very forbidding front to the intelligent amateur. The nomenclature is the trouble: H. G. Wells has pointed out that geological terms are extraordinarily confusing and ill-chosen; the great H. W. Fowler when faced with "pleistocene" merely sighed and wrote "see Barbarism"; even an anonymous writer in an encyclopædia admits that the nomenclature of petrology "is somewhat complicated." During the war those who had to teach astro-navigation to aircrews decided to scrap the elaborate constellations; there is something to be said for scrapping the whole geological vocabulary when instructing holidaymakers in the structure of the countryside over which they wander. Professor Trueman does not go quite as far as this, but he does show himself to be a brilliant simplifier, and this book, now re-issued as a Pelican, remains much the best book on the subject. Not that it would be impossible to improve it—the little landscapes, for instance, are neat rather than inspiring—but anyone who feels curiosity about the scenery of England and Wales should start with this book and as good a selection of maps as can be got together. Professor Trueman must go on. Scotland and Ireland are waiting.

Greece: Moments of Grace. By ASHLEY SMITH. *Eyre & Spottiswoode.* 15*s.*

Falling in love with a foreign country—especially a Mediterranean country—is the one form of love-making in which the English excel. In this respect the French are narcissistic and the Germans, while forming a deep attachment for the culture of another country (Winkelmann, Goethe), may go no further. But the English fall in love. At the end of the war Mr. Smith was posted from Italy to Greece, and when he arived in Athens he was ignorant of the charms of his future mistress except for a shipboard reading of Lowes Dickinson's *The Greek View of Life*. From the first day he kept a journal, here published, which marks the gradual burgeoning of his love. Mr. Smith, one feels, must speak for thousands of English soldiers who, without being able to record their emotions, felt as he did. For this is not a sophisticated book, offers no new information or opinions, content to be a simple case-history of an average man's reaction to a new country. His interests are wide—Athens dance-halls and slums, the treasures of Patras, prostitutes and the Parthenon; he was overwhelmed by the grandeur of the scenery near Corinth and has some interesting and perceptive remarks about the difference between Greek and Italian landscape. All this he describes with enthusiasm and quite humbly, but occasionally, while he lies writing in some olive grove, the wonder of it all forces him to break into a rather too eloquent prose. "You have a destiny, Greece," he cries, "I am certain of it now, as I was doubtful of it when I first came. There is a message from you to the world and from the world to you." Such passages only slightly marr a very sincere book.

A Critical Anthology of Spanish Verse. By E. ALLISON PEERS. *The University Press of Liverpool.* 42*s.*

This book is a collection of 367 Spanish poems ranging from the twelfth century to the present day. A short biographical notice introduces each poet and most of the poems are provided with a commentary on the same page which is intended to make them more intelligible to the English reader, Although some of these comments are rather elementary, many of them are useful.

No anthology has ever been compiled that does not disappoint those who feel that their favourite poems have been omitted. But this one has some inexplicable *lacunae*. Why are we not given any of the *canticas de serrana* of the Archpriest of Hita, in which he describes his love encounters with the ugly shepherdesses? Why only one of the *villancicos* of the 16th century song-books? And then, one asks, must Calderón never be represented except by a single sonnet? He is one of the greatest Spanish poets, but few people know this because much of his finest poetry is in plays that are never read. Yet it extracts easily from its context. Had Professor Peers left out the long extracts he gives us from those pompous windbags Quintana, Gallego and J. M. Heredia, he could have given us a better anthology in the same number of pages.

However these criticisms must not be taken to detract too much from the merit of this book. It is a fine collection, fully representative of the modern poets, and anyone who cares for Spanish poetry will be glad to possess it. It is also excellently produced.

Week-end Competitions

No. 1,004

Set by Gerald Giradot

The usual prizes are offered for a testamentary letter from a black sheep father to his priggish son. Limit 200 words. Entries by 24th May.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 1,001

Set by Thomas Smallbones

The usual prizes are offered for fourteen lines of verse, in the temperate manner and spirit of Goldsmith's *Retaliation*, on any one of the following: Lord Montgomery, Sir Laurence Olivier, Aldous Huxley, T. S. Eliot, Sir Stafford Cripps, Denis Compton, Harold Nicolson. An extract from the passages on Burke is given below for the benefit of competitors who are away from their libraries.

Here lies our good Edmund, whose genius was such,
We scarcely can praise it, or blame it too much;
Who, born for the Universe, narrow'd his mind,
And to party gave up what was meant for mankind.
Though equal to all things, for all things unfit,
Too nice for a statesman, to proud for a wit:
For a patriot, too cool; for a drudge, disobedient;
And too fond of the *right* to pursue the *expedient*.
In short, 'twas his fate, unemploy'd, or in place, Sir,
To eat mutton cold, and cut blocks with a razor.

Report by Thomas Smallbones

In a large and amusing entry the Chancellor of the Exchequer was a prime favourite: doubtless because the equivocal note which Goldsmith plays on in *Retaliation* is most loudly to be heard in him. Lord Montgomery, in whom it is also, I should have thought, very marked, was only twice attempted, in both cases without success. Mr. Harold Nicolson proved too elusive: Mr. Aldous Huxley too subtle; while in the case of Sir Laurence Olivier, fan-feeling blinded many eyes. This fault, however, I considered venal for Mr. Denis Compton. I should like to have printed entries by Atlas, P. Gorham, C. B. Pithecus Peter Sheldon and Ladybird. A first prize of two guineas to Frank Dunnill. Thirteen shillings to the other five printed below.

Hic jacet Lord Tight-Belt, the late Stafford Cripps,
Too glum for the City, too proud for the Whips,
For his foes too austere, for his colleagues too thrifty,
He was tactfully raised to the peerage in '50;
But too late! At the head of a broad coalition
He returned, and prescribed for the patient's condition:
Twelve months on low diet, five years of deflation,
For the Plebs no respite, no relief for the Nation.
Thus, Budget by Budget—all reason and light—
He belaboured the Left and constricted the Right,
Till, the spectre-thin Chief of a skeleton crew,
He sipped his last lime-juice in 2002,
And, for Heav'n too abstemious, for Hell far too odd,
He's in Purgat'ry—gravely admonishing God.

FRANK DUNNILL

At last reconciled to our temporal laws,
Tom Eliot has taken his ultimate pause;
Who, indiff'rent to fools, unimpressed by the plebs,
Was devoured by the earnest and skimmed by the debs.
When he worked for eight years in a bank it was found
He was worth more in value and gold than a Pound.
Some reckoned his rhymes insufficiently gay—
Though Bloomsbury fawned, what had Hoxton to say?
"It's clever," said others, "Oh yes, but inhuman—
The voice of a merely impeccable pew-man,
Whose poetry probably wouldn't mean much
Unless you had read the *Inferno* in Dutch."
A plague on the knaves! When his critics were tippling,
He wrote about cats and he edited Kipling.

J. R. TILL.

Here lies our good Laurence, who fell in between
The stool of the stage and that of the screen;
Who, born for the boards, and far stronger than most,
Was thinned to the celluloid's silvery ghost.
For Hamlet, too sturdy; for Hal, too explicit;
Too subtle for stardom, too handsome to miss it:
A matinee idol, yet changed to a knight;
For Lear, so gigantic; for Saahlow, so slight.
Though his beautiful outline was not a bit bent
He was rarely observed to be free of a Dent.
If Laurence it was that we all went to see,
An ulterior motive was Vivien Leigh.
He left the Old Vic to experience near-failure,
While he found success in far-distant Australia.

EDWARD BLISHEN

Here lies Denis Compton, describe me who can,
London's pride, the abridgement of cricketing man;
Surrendering to no one, yet Master of Arts
To make others surrender their wickets or hearts,
While his smiles and provocative glances displayed
The Mercutio of cricket, a very good blade.
The idol of Lords, and the Men of the Hill,
(For even the Cobbers admitted his skill)
Disdaining misfortune, he smiled at her thunder;
The barrackers never got him down "down under."
When he scattered the field with unorthodox hook,
(For this Man of the Century knew not the Book)
The wiseacres frowned. Unrepentant and game
Compton danced down the wicket, and on into Fame.

WM. L. LINDSAY

Sir Stafford, the cleverest man in the State
Could all business perform (tho' could nothing create).
He was mortal, for sure, since he ate, laughed and drank,
Yet within him was notic'd a curious blank.
His acquaintance discuss'd it, in mirth or in sadness;
At last 'twas observ'd, he was lacking in badness.
He drank—but not liquor; he ate—but not meat;
Gave love, but no passion; gave light, but no heat;
He laugh'd without malice, rebuk'd without wrath;
Excell'd without pride; could e'en rest without sloth.
So 'twas seen that the curious blankness within
Was the absence of shame, of remorse, and of sin;
And that Stafford, the dear nonpareil of his kind,
Had a heart, but no soul; had a brain, but no mind.

FERGIE

Here lies our good Aldous, a Huxley, admitted,
But likewise an Arnold, poetical-witted,
His world was a Brave World—not quite Aristotle's,
For men were but fetuses prisoned in bottles;
A cynic who quaker-like grew and pacific,
In mystical discipline not less prolific;
But philosopher, novelist, poet at heart
Art moves him to practise for sake of the Art.
Though short of all outward, material vision
He deals with the shortage with signal precision;
Enlarges the inward, and, letter by letter,
Has shown how mere sight may be utilized better.
In atomic catastrophe finally see
What Huxley does eschatologically.

GUY KENDALL

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LARGE and comfortable Board Room situated in Buckingham Palace Road, near Victoria Station, London, available for meetings of not more than 40. Central htg. Private telephone room. Charge for forenoon or afternoon meetings: £2 2s. For whole day meetings: £3 3s. Telephone: SLOane 0341-4.

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PERSONAL—continued

CARAVAN for sale, built artist craftsman. Completely furnished. £495. Leek, Godshill, Fordingbridge, Hants.

PSYCHOLOGIST. Oscar Köllerström, 10 York Gate, London, N.W.1.

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THREE of you can go by canal and river from Stone (Staffs) to Tewkesbury (Glos) and back in 2 wks. with a covered motor boat & good tent for £21. Four can do it in a comfortable cruiser for £44 in June or July. Canal Cruising Co., Ltd., Stone, Staffs.

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PERSONAL—continued

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LONDON. Close Holland Pk. Tube & West End. First-class service rooms with bkfst. & dinner for professional people; newly furn. and decorated. Must be seen to be appreciated. 143 Holland Park Ave. W.11. Park 6280.

NEWLY furn. dble. bedsittg. kitchenette & bathroom, £4 4s. Single service rooms from 2½gns. GLA. 1967. Box 9196.

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DOCTOR & wife require 3-room unfurnished flat in S. London within next 4 months. Box 9646.

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YOUNG prof. couple need s/c flat early summer. 3-4 rms., k. & b. Long lease, mod. rent. S.W. London. Box 8993

SCHOOLS

BEVERLEY School, Wolfelee, nr. Hawick. Prog. Co-Educ. Children from 3 years. Healthy, happy environment. Special attention given to diet. Entire charge, arrangements made for children with parents abroad.

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MORCOTT Hall School, Morcott, Rutland, near Uppingham, 20 miles Leicester. Attractive surroundings, excellent climate for asthmatics. Qualified staff. Number of vacancies for boarders: Girls 7-17, Boys 6-10. For partics. apply: Mrs. C. P. L. Sinclair, Ph.D.

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APPOINTMENTS VACANT

None of the vacancies in these columns relates to a man between 18 and 50 inclusive or a woman between 18 and 40 inclusive unless he or she is excepted from the provision of the Control of Engagement Order, 1947, or the vacancy is for employment excepted from the provision of that Order.

MINISTRY of Education. H.M. Inspectors. Applics. invited from men and women for posts as H.M. Inspector under the Min. of Education. Candidates, preferably under 50 on Dec. 31, 1949, should possess good educ. qualifics. and exp. in Adult Education. Applics. will be specially welcomed from candidates who have qualifics. in Economics, Philosophy and Psychology. Posts, which are permanent and pensionable, carry a salary scale for London area of: £900×£30—£1,050×£35—£1,225×£50—£1,370 (man), £800×£30—£1,100×35—£1,200 (woman). Salaries of Inspectors working outside London area are less by £40 at each point of the scale. In spec. cases successful candidates may be appointed at a commencing salary above the min. Further partics., together with applic. form, may be obtained on writing to Secretary, Ministry of Education (Inspectors' Section), Curzon Street House, Curzon St. London, W.1. Closing date for applics. will be July 31, 1949.

THE Queen's College hopes to elect shortly to a Praelectorship in Modern History, to which a Fellowship will be attached. The Fellow will be reqd. to give instruction to members of the College in the modern (as distinct from the medieval) periods and will be expected to take up duties on Oct. 1, 1949. If the successful candidate has had little or no exp. of teaching and research he will not be reqd. to undertake more than six hours' teaching a week during the first and possibly also the second year after his election in order that he may devote time to advanced study. In determining initial stipend the College will take into account age and exp. For an Official Fellow undertaking full-time teaching it will be not less than £650 p.a. and will rise to a max. of £1,300 p.a. An Official Fellow is entitled to a room in College free of rent, rates and taxes and to dinner free of charge at the Common Table. The College has a scheme of children's allowances. Applic. forms obtainable from the Provost, The Queen's College, Oxford, and should be returned before May 28, tog. with names of 3 refs. The choice of the College will not be limited to those who apply.

UNIV. of Liverpool. Department of Economic Science. Applics. invited for an appointment to be made in the subject of Economic Statistics. Appointment will be made either to a Readership or to a Senior Lectureship, according to the status and qualifics. of the person appointed. The range within which initial salary will be fixed is at present £900-£1,300 p.a. Applics., stating age, academic qualifics. and exp., together with names of three refs., should be received by May 21, 1949, by Stanley Dumbell, Registrar, from whom further partics. may be obtained.

UNIV. of Leeds. Applics. invited for post of Tutor of Women Students at a salary on a scale rising from £700 to a maximum of not less than £1,000: initial salary may be fixed above the minimum according to qualifics. and exp. Appointment will be effective from Oct. 1, 1949. Applics. (12 copies) should reach Registrar, University, Leeds, 2 (from whom further partics. may be obtained) by May 21.

UNIV. of Leeds. Dept. of Extra-Mural Studies. Applics. invited for Staff Tutorships in (i) Psychology, (ii) English Literature, and (iii) in one or more of the following subjects, viz., Philosophy, Sociology or Government. Staff Tutorships (ii) and (iii) will involve residence in Cleveland. Appointments made either on probationary Staff Tutor scale of £400-£25-£500 or on Staff Tutor scale £550-£25-£900. Applics., with the names of three refs., should reach the Registrar, The University, Leeds, 2 (from whom further partics. may be obtained) by May 31, 1949.

UNIV. of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. Lectureship in Bantu Studies. Applics. are invited from persons qualified to lecture and to take tutorial classes in Social Anthropology and in Native Administration (South African and/or British). Salary is £550 p.a., rising by annual increments of £25 to £800 p.a. In addition the Univ. pays a temporary cost-of-living allowance which at present amounts to £75 p.a. for married men or single men with dependents, and £57 4s. p.a. in the case of others. A higher initial salary may be paid on the ground of special qualifics. and exp. Further partics. and information as to the method of application obtainable from Secretary, Assocn. of Universities of the British Commonwealth, 5 Gordon Sq. London, W.C.1. Closing date for receipt of applics. is May 31, 1949.

UNIV. of Leeds. Applics. invited for two Assistant Tutorships in the Dept. of Social Studies, each at a salary of £400-£25-£500 with effect from Oct. 1, 1949, viz.: (a) Assistant Tutor in Practical Social Work. (b) Assistant Tutor mainly concerned with the Dept.'s share in the training of Health Visitor students. Applics. should reach the Registrar, University, Leeds, 2 (from whom further partics. obtainable) by May 21, 1949.

W.E.A., Eastern District. Applics. invited to fill Vacancy Tutor-Organiser, Fenland area. Scale £450 to £600. Partics. and application form, which must be returned within two weeks of this advertisement, obtainable (send stamped addressed envelope), from F. M. Jacques, W.E.A., Cambridgeshire House, 7 Hills Rd. Cambridge.

APPOINTMENTS VACANT—continued

ROYAL Air Force—Educ. Branch. Applics. invited for appointments to Permanent Commissions. Age limits 23 to 33 (Upper limit may be raised for war service). Candidates should ordinarily have 1st or 2nd class hons. degree. Mathematics, Physics and Engineering are main subjects reqd. at present but appointments also offered to men qualified in Arts subjects. Pay on appointment depends on qualifics., exp. and war service. For example, a man aged 25 may draw pay at rates from £310 to £420 p.a. and, if married and living out with his family, marriage allowance of £337 p.a. Single officers receive free furn. accom. All officers receive rations or a tax-free allowance of £60 p.a. Time promotion to Squadron Leader, in which rank pay with marriage allowance rises to £1,104 p.a., rations or ration allowance in addition. Promotion beyond Squadron Leader by selection. Retired pay varies with rank (e.g. £625 for Wing Commander, £825 for Group Captain). Short Service Commissions: A large number of appointments offered for 3, 4 or 5 years' service. Min. age 21 yrs. Candidates should be univ. grads. or otherwise entitled to recognition as qualified teachers. Pay on appointment and allowances the same as for perm. commissions. A gratuity payable on completion of service on the active list. Opportunities for appointment to pe.m. commissions. Women's Royal Air Force. Short Service Commissions offered to women under same conditions as to men, except that pay rates are approx. three-quarters of those for men. Full details and applic. forms for all above appointments from Air Ministry, A.R.I., Kingsway, London, W.C.2.

UNIV. of Sheffield. Applics. invited for post of Research Assistant in Social Medicine in the Dept. of Social and Industrial Medicine, to begin duties as soon as possible. Salary £450, rising to £500 p.a., with superannuation provision under the Federated Superannuation Scheme for Univs., and family allowance. Commencing salary will depend upon qualifics. and exp. of the successful candidate. Applics. (4 copies) with names and addresses of not less than 2 referees and, if desired, copies of testimonials, should reach A. W. Chapman, Registrar (from whom further partics. obtainable) by May 21.

BERKSHIRE Educ. Ctee. Easthampstead Park Training College for Women, nr. Wokingham. Applics. invited for Sept., 1949, from men or women with suitable qualifics. and exp. for the following posts: 1. Lecturer in Needlecraft (including crafts). 2. Lecturer in Education. 3. Lecturer in History (good Honours degree essen.). Subsidiary English or Religious Knowledge would be an additional qualific. 4. Lecturer in Mathematics (good Honours degree essen.). It is essential that all candidates should have worked with children. Exp. in a Training College would be an advantage. Salaries in accordance with the Scale for Teaching Staffs of Training Colleges with free residence. Forms of applic., to be returned within fourteen days of the appearance of this advertisement, may be obtained from W. F. Herbert, Director of Education, Shire Hall, Reading.

PSYCHOLOGISTS (non-medical) reqd. by the Prison Commission in London & the Provinces. Duties, under the direction of Medical Officers, involve application of tests to male prisoners, preparation of descriptive reports in special cases, and some research and development work. Sal. £650-£750 according to qualifics. which should include the Associateship of the British Psychological Soc. and exp. of vocational guidance & personnel selection. Appointments would be unestablished, but selected candidates may be considered for establishment at a later date through Civil Service competitions. Applics. in response to this announcement are not debarred by the provisions of the Control of Engagement Orders, 1947 and 1948. Applic. forms obtainable from Establishment Officer (Psy), Prison Commission, Horseferry House, Dean Ryle St. London, S.W.1. Completed forms must be returned by May 27, 1949.

THE Civil Service Commissioners invite applics. for perm. appointments as Asst. Experimental Officer to be filled by competitive interview during 1949. Interviews will be held shortly after receipt of completed applic. form and successful candidates may expect early appointments. Posts are in various Govt. Depts. and cover a wide variety of scientific (incl. engineering) qualifics. Places of work are spread throughout Gt. Britain. Candidates must be at least 17½ years and under 26 years on Aug. 1, 1949; time spent on a regular engagement in H.M. Forces may be deducted from actual age. Candidates must have obtained the Higher School Cert. with maths. or a science subject as a principal subject, or an equiv. qualific. Higher qualifics. an advantage to candidates over the age of 20. Incl. London salary scale (men) £230-£490. Rates for women somewhat lower. Superann. provision under the Superannuation Acts. Further partics. and forms of applic. from the Secy., Civil Service Commission, Scientific Branch, 27 Grosvenor Sq. London, W.1, quoting No. 2522. Completed applic. forms should be returned as soon as possible.

TWO posts vacant Sept. in Independent School (girls), N.W. London, (a) Music, (b) Art. Gt. scope given rt. people. Box 9219.

CASE worker, progressive approach, attractive and effective interviewer, reliable organiser and decisive worker. 1st class typing (as one of "tools of the trade"). State sal. reqd., E.I.B.A., 32 Old Burlington St., W.1.

APPOINTMENTS VACANT—continued

SUDAN Govt.—Min. of Education. Director of Educ. invites applics. for follg. posts: (1) Asst. Masters in Secondary Schools, (2) Headmasters for Primary Schools, (3) Handwork Master (or Mistress) in a Teacher Training School, and (4) Production Editor of a Publications Bureau. Qualifics.—For posts (1) & (2) a Univ. Degree or its equiv. is essential. Exp. of teaching English (or another mod. language), Maths., Geography, History, Physical Training, Art and Craft, or Science is an advantage. For (3) a Diploma or other evidence of technical training relevant to duties of post. For (4) principal requirement is several years' exp. with a good publishing company. Normal age limits are 23 to 29, but applics. from older candidates will be considered. Duties of posts are as follows: (1) teaching one or more of the usual secondary school subjects; (2) taking charge of new primary schools in the Southern Sudan; (3) training of teachers and framing of syllabuses in light crafts for Intermediate School; and (4) organisation of production, distribution and admin. side of a Publications Bureau. Appointment will be on either (a) Long Term Contract, or (b) Provident Fund Contract, or (c) Short Term Contract with bonus as may be decided by Govt. Under (a) sal. scale will be £E.480-540-660-720-780-852-924-996-1,080 (biennial increases). Subject to satisfactory completion of two years' probation, contractual period envisaged is not less than seven years, on completion of which candidate qualifies for a gratuity according to a sliding scale. Gratuity on completion of seven years' contractual period is £E.1,590. This gratuity is also payable on suppression of post or replacement by Sudanese before completion of contractual period. Special gratuities for discharge on medical grounds before completion of contractual period. Under (b) sal. scale will be some 17½% higher than under (a). Provident Fund scheme is a contributory one and partics. are supplied with general information listed below. Under (c) sal. scale is approx. 25% higher than that for (a). Cost of living allowance from £E.180 to £E.390 according to number of dependants is at present payable. Outfit allowance of £E.60 is payable on appointment, provided starting rate does not exceed £E.600 p.a. on Long Term, £E.700 on Provident Fund, or £E.800 on Short Term Contract. £E.1 = £1 0s. 6d. There is at present no income tax in the Sudan. Strict medical exam. Free passage on appointment. Further partics. and applic. forms from: Sudan Agent in London, Wellington House, Buckingham Gate, London, S.W.1. Please mark envelopes "Education"—"(1)," "(2)," "(3)," or "(4)" as appropriate.

ACHIMOTA School, Gold Coast. Wanted: Men or women to teach up to Higher Certificate in following subjects—Mathematics, Science (incl. Biology), French and English, Latin and English, Art. Salary scale from £450 rising to max. of £1,000 plus overseas allowance. Quarters provided with deduction for house rent. Free passages, medical and dental service. Leave to United Kingdom every 18 months. Applic. forms from The Secretary, London Office, Achimota School, 2 Eaton Gate, London, S.W.1.

AUSTRALIA—Melbourne: The Council of St. Catherine's School, Toorak, invites applics. for position of Resident Headmistress to commence duties Jan. 1, 1950. St. Catherine's has 350 girls (at present 48 boarders) ages 4 to 17. Appointment, for a term of 5 years, thereafter renewable, carries a salary of £A750 p.a. with self-contained quarters. 1st class passage to Melbourne provided. Candidates, who must be Hons. Grads. of a U.K. or Dominion Univ., and members of the Church of England or Presbyterian Church, should send applics. immediately with details of educ. & exp. and copies of not more than 3 testimonials (in duplicate) to: Education Panel, Society for the Oversea Settlement of British Women, 43 Parliament St. London, S.W.1.

CHILDREN'S Social Adustment have vacancy for Junior Teacher, man, general subjects, music, elementary science. Community school maladjusted children nine to fifteen. Also Housemother, cooking, shorthand typing. Applics. to Secretary, C.S.A., 36 Carlton Hill, N.W.8.

REQUIRED: Qualified Junior, Infant and Nursery Teachers—Junior Teacher with teaching exp. for prog. day school. Accom. available at the school. Apply Fortis Green School, Fortis Green, London, N.2.

WOMEN wanted to train as teachers. Free one-year course, with adequate allowances adapted to candidates' reqs. Applicants should be between 21 and 35 years of age; older women may also be considered if spec. suitable. They should have undertaken National Service for not less than one year starting not later than 1st July, 1945. On completion of course, student ranks as qualified teacher. Salary scale rises from £270 to £444, with pension on retirement. Join the profession that looks after the future. Write before June 30 next, when scheme closes, for full details of Emergency Teacher Training Scheme, to: Ministry of Education (Teachers' Branch), 23 Belgrave Sq. London, S.W.1.

UNIV. of London, Inst. of Child Health. Part-time Library Assistant reqd., hours 2-7 p.m. Mondays to Fridays incl. Salary £250 with annual increments of £10 to £300. Applics. should be sent immediately with copies of 2 recent testimonials to the Dean, Institute of Child Health, The Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond St. W.C.1.

APPOINTMENTS VACANT—continued

WANTED: Man capable taking charge correspondence and committees. Expd. in preparing agendas, minutes & reports. Salary dep. on knowledge but not less than £450 p.a. Apply Trades Advisory Council, 280 Euston Rd. N.W.1.

ELLERSLIE Hall Approved School, 3 Cavendish Rd. Leeds, 1. Applics. invited for position of House Mistress—young—for above School of 18 girls (ages 15 to 17 years on admission) of higher intelligence. Applicants especially interested in recreational and social activities, Youth Hostels, P.T., also handwork and music, would be an advantage. House Mistresses in this School are expected to give assistance generally in the training of the girls, supervision of domestic duties, school work and character training. Applicants trained in Institutional Management or in Youth Club work would be acceptable for this post. If possessing a recog. qualification, e.g., Social Sci. Diploma, commencing sal. according to age would be £290 p.a., with an ultimate max. of £460 p.a. If not holding a special qualification commencing sal. would be £290, rising to £325 p.a. Sal. in both cases less £78 for board and residence.

PSYCHOLOGICAL Tester reqd. by Prison Commission, at H.M. Borstal Reception Centre, Latchmere House, near Richmond, Surrey. Duties, under direction of a Psychologist, would involve carrying out intelligence, personality and projection, and aptitude tests, both individually and in groups. Salary scale £350×£10—£400 p.a.; starting pay according to exp. Applics. in response to this announcement not debarred by provisions of Control of Engagement Orders, 1947 & 1948. Applic. forms may be obtained from Establishment Officer (Psy. T.), Prison Commission, Horseferry House, Dean Ryle St. London, S.W.1. Completed forms must be returned by May 27.

EXPERIENCED Matron required in September at The Friends' School, Saffron Walden, co-educational Quaker boarding-school, to organise the work of the department, which includes care of clothes and linen and some supervision duties. For further particulars write to Mistress of the Family.

L.C.C. invites applics. from women who have completed a course of training at a nursery training college or who hold the cert. of the National Nursery Examination Board for engagement as resident Nursery Assistants, Class I, at its residential nursery schools. Salary £165 to £195 a year plus tax-free emoluments of board, lodging and laundry. Send s.a.e. for applic. form and further details to Children's Officer (EO/Estab. 6D/122), County Hall, Westminster Bridge, London, E.1. (391)

B.B.C. invites applics. from typists with perfect knowledge of one or more of the following languages—Russian, Roumanian, Serbo-Croat, Greek. Thorough knowledge of language essen. as work consists mostly of taking dictation in language concerned straight on to typewriter. Candidates must be prepared for shift and week-end duties. Good use could probably be made of applicants only able to work part-time or in evenings or at week-ends. Detailed applics. to Appointments Officer, B.B.C., Broadcasting House, London, W.1, marked "Language Typists, N. Stm.," within 7 days. For acknowledgement enclose s.a.e.

THE Central Council for Health Education invites applics. for appointment of Secretary/Shorthand-Typist, aged about 28/35 years; salary £300 upwards accdg. to age. Good standard of shorthand-typing and able to work without supervision. Staff pension fund. Applics., stating age, educ. & exp., to The Medical Adviser & Secretary, Central Council for Health Educ., Tavistock House, Tavistock Sq. London, W.C.1, within 10 days.

PHŒNIX House/Readers Union, book publishers, require following female staff: full-time Junior Shorthand-typist; Temporary Copy-typist; Part-time Typist and General Clerk (3 days a week). Five-day week; canteen. Apply 38 William IV St. Charing Cross.

SHORTHAND-Typist reqd. (age 18-22), capable of undertaking some secretarial duties. Office hours are 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., with occasional Saturday morning duties. Commencing salary £5-£6 a week, according to age and exp.; three weeks' paid annual holiday. Applics., in writing, should be addressed to Secretary, Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, 2 Beaumont St. W.1.

L.C.C. Resident Domestic Assistants (women) required at Residential Schools and Homes in the Home Counties. Rate of pay 82s. for a 48-hour week less 23s. a week for board, lodging and laundry. Two weeks annual holiday plus the six public holidays or days in lieu. Application forms and further details from the Education Officer (EO/Estab. 6D/RDA), The County Hall, London, S.E.1.

COOK (female) reqd. Gross wages £4 8s. p.w.; extra payment for duty on Suns. and Bank Hols. In accordance with the recommendations of the National Joint Council the working week is of 48 hours with one weekly rest day and two weeks' annual leave. The position is resident with comf. quarters and all amenities. There is a deduction of £1 5s. p.w. from the above wage for board, lodging, laundry and uniform. Applics. to Secretary, Littlemore Hospital, Littlemore, Nr. Oxford.

SECRETARIES and Shorthand Typists wanted and available. Posts up to £8. Also Juniors and temps. The St. Stephen's Secretariat, 38 Parliament St. S.W.1. WHI. 0606. No fee to staff.

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THE NEW

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THE CASE OF GERHART EISLER

SOME day we shall be told the whole story of Gerhart Eisler's voyage, including the details of the radio talks between the United States authorities and the Captain. On the issue of Eisler's extradition we must await the verdict of the British courts. There appears to be plenty of room for argument. According to precedent, the High Court will consider evidence to show whether extradition is demanded on account of a crime in the ordinary sense or whether the crime has a political character. In the past British courts have interpreted the right of asylum to cover assassinations or attempted assassinations when the motive of the assassin has been not personal but political.

This is matter for the courts. Our immediate concern is with the methods by which Eisler was seized on a Polish ship in British waters. Many questions need to be answered. Some of them were raised by the Polish Ambassador, some were put to the Home Secretary in the House of Commons. Was it according to usage for the police to drag Eisler off the ship without previously consulting the Polish Ambassador? Is there any precedent or excuse for the procedure by which, without so much as an attempt at courteous negotiation with the Captain, some twenty police boarded the *Batory* and detained the Captain under duress? Why—even more strange — were the police accompanied by American officials, and why were these officials permitted to relay to the Captain the State Department's threat of sanctions? Did the Home Office—or, as we suspect, only the Foreign Office —know of, or authorise, this drastic action? Mr. Chuter Ede explained in the House that the American Embassy had resorted to a legal procedure by which it could go direct to the Southampton magistrate with the demand that Eisler should be seized on the Polish vessel. If this procedure is normal, we must conclude that, if ever the Home Secretary wished a man to be extradited from the United States for a crime committed on British soil, then the British Consul in New York could present a *prima facie* case to a Manhattan Court and have him arrested by New York "cops" on a foreign ship in the Hudson. Or, to take a closely parallel case, if the Polish Embassy had wished to obtain the extradition of Mr. Mikolajczyk when he was in England, would the British authorities have arrested him, merely because the Polish Ambassador alleged to some local British magistrate that Mr. Mikolajczyk had been guilty of, say, taking from Poland property that did not belong to him?

These questions are of the greatest importance. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the extradition case against Eisler, the way that the police handled his arrest was calculated to create the impression that Britain is a colony whose Government must discard the traditions of its own country when American wishes are expressed. There are, of course, a small number of "imperialist" Americans who will be pleased that America should behave in this way and that Britain should acquiesce. But such Americans are not typical of the United States, where "imperialism" is not popular. Nor are the Americans who like such methods those whom it is worth while, from a moral or even for that matter an economic point of view, for a Labour Government to appease.

The Miners and the Board

Work has been resumed in the Lancashire coalfield, but on terms which hold a threat of further trouble, possibly on a wider scale. The fresh negotiations which were begun on the claim for concessionary coal soon ended. In deciding that the time was opportune to reopen negotiations on an official basis, and to resume work meanwhile, the delegates' conference at Bolton last Saturday "noted," with significant emphasis, that the National Executive of the N.U.M. supported the Lancashire demand for concessionary coal and that it "calls upon the N.C.B. at national level to bring about a satisfactory settlement." The N.C.B.'s offer to supply coal from Lancashire at dealer prices plus cost of cartage—*i.e.*, at 55s.-65s. a ton according to grade—had little chance of acceptance. It is possible that negotiations at "national level" may achieve some more sensible rationalisation of concessionary coal usage throughout the coalfields. Otherwise there is a grave danger that the strike—or an overtime ban —may be resumed next week. That this issue should have caused a stoppage which has already cost the men £500,000 in wages and the country 400,000 tons of coal is a shocking testimony to the strained relations existing between the N.C.B. and the miners. If further evidence were needed that things are far from well within the coal industry, it is to be found in a pamphlet published this week by the Fabian Society (*Miners and the Board*. 1s.). The report, studiously moderate in its comments, is based upon replies received to a questionnaire addressed to a small but representative sample of people well-placed for ascertaining and evaluating the general trend of opinion in the coalfields. The picture, which conveys the impression of careful sub-editing, is disquieting. With little knowledge of N.C.B. personalities, and still less confidence in individuals whose records are known, the miners are depicted as bitterly disappointed with the fruits of nationalisation—at any rate in the sphere of personnel relations. Their dissatisfaction extends to complaints that control by an over-staffed, bureaucratic Board is remote and inhumane; that the machinery for settling disputes works with intolerable slowness; and, perhaps even more important, that the mechanism of joint consulta-